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ABSTRACT

This document offers a detailed description of the dynamics involved in the choice of an independent neighborhood school. These primarily urban schools are an expression of cultural power and identity among minority groups who wish to ensure access to opportunities for academic achievement for their children and also to control the content and context of their children's education. Information was analyzed from the following sources: (1) telephone interviews with 220 school administrators; (2) a survey of 211 schools; (3) a survey of a sample of parents of students from each school; and (4) interviews with 35 families selected from 10 different schools. The following major findings are reported: (1) 221 schools serve about 12,000 students, most of whom live in urban areas; (2) most are elementary schools, and enrollment averages between 100 and 149 students; (3) approximately one-half are religious; (4) most enroll more than 80 percent black students and their curricula stress affirmation of the racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds of their students; (5) schools are characterized by operational autonomy and dependence on tuition; (6) 87 percent of the students' families earn annual incomes of less than $49,000, 57 percent earn less than $30,000, and 24 percent earn less than $15,000; (7) most families live within three miles of the school; and (8) educational environment and quality of the educational program were most frequently cited reasons for choosing the school, but cultural and religious affiliation and low tuition were also cited. Statistical data are included on five graphs and 15 tables. The following materials are appended: (1) the school data form and suggestions for telephone surveyors; (2) the school survey questionnaire; (3) a letter to schools soliciting cooperation; (4) the parent survey questionnaire; and (5) the parent, administrator, teacher, and student interview questions. (FMW)

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Dare to Choose

Parental Choice at Independent Neighborhood Schools

Joan Davis Ratteray and Mwalimu Shujaa

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FOREWORD

Educators and policymakers have accepted the challenge of deciding how best to reform America's educational system. One objective is to increase the levels of academic performance for students graduating from the system, and another is to enhance the Nation's role as a leader in an international community that is increasingly competitive and technologically advanced.

A critical element in the movement for national reform is discovering how to increase educational opportunities, quantitatively and qualitatively, for young people from ethnic and racial minority groups in this Nation, such as African-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, American Indians, and Asian Americans.

While there have been many efforts throughout the years to accomplish this objective, they have been ineffective for the majority of young people in these groups. This may be so because reforms usually have been developed in the artificial atmosphere of academic research centers and government bureaucracies. To the extent that national education reform movements have concerned minority groups at all, the approach most often has been one of condescending outreach, as in "What can we do for them."

The Institute for Independent Education became concerned about this lack of serious education reform that would have a

positive effect on African-Americans and other minority-group youth. It noted that there was also a paucity of data on options in education beyond public school systems and traditional private schools. The Institute wanted to take a closer look at the education of these young people but begin the investigation at a different point than is usually taken by traditional research. We decided to examine solutions developed by the people themselves. More importantly, it wanted to focus on how parents -- and African-American parents in particular -- have defined, from their own perspectives, what they need for the education of their children, what they have committed themselves to do about it, and how their choices of independent neighborhood schools are meeting their unique needs.

The independent neighborhood schools that are the subject of the present research are in the unique position of being able to solve many of the problems facing young people in urban education settings. They are able to do this because they constitute a smaller and more manageable sample, with flexible administrative structures that are suitable for introducing and monitoring new instructional ideas. Because of this experience, many of them can serve as models for innovation in larger and more traditional systems like public schools.

The Institute believes that for these reasons, considering the experiences and needs of parents, teachers, administrators and children from independent neighborhood schools is both

appropriate and necessary in any discussion of education reform in the United States.

Thus was born this research project, "Dare to Choose: Parental Choice at Independent Neighborhood Schools." We are pleased to offer this detailed description of the factors that shape the way American parents, especially in urban areas, exercise their freedom to choose options beyond government-sponsored education for their children.

Joan Davis Ratteray, President
Institute for Independent Education

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STUDY TEAM AND ADVISORY PANEL

Study Team:

Dr. Joan Davis Ratteray, Project Director
President, Institute for Independent Education, Inc.

Mwalimu Shujaa, Assistant Project Director
Co-Founder, Afrikan People's Action School, Trenton, NJ
Member of the Executive Committee, Council of Independent Black Institutions

Advisory Panel Members:

Dr. Brigitte Berger, Professor of Sociology
Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA

Dr. John Cardwell, Evaluation Consultant
Evaxx, Inc., New York, NY

Dr. Michael Moffat, Associate Professor,
Department of Anthropology
Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ

Dr. Joyce Penfield, Assistant Professor
Language Education, Graduate School of Education
Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ

Dr. William M. Phillips, Jr., Professor
Graduate School of Education
Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ

Mr. Peter Skerry, Political Science Consultant
Washington, D.C.

The Institute is grateful for the many contributions of its advisory panel members, during both the project design and report-writing stages. It should not be construed, however, that the panelists necessarily endorse the methodology selected or the findings and conclusions ultimately presented in this study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The study team and the Institute for Independent Education, Inc., wish to express their deep gratitude to the school administrators, teachers, families, and students and others whose cooperation made this survey possible.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

The independent neighborhood schools in this study serve approximately 12,000 African-American, Hispanic/Latino-American, Native-American, and Asian-American children, most of whom live in urban areas across the Nation. Many of the schools were started in the early 1970s, while others began early in this century and some are over 100 years old.

They are five-day academic institutions, providing instruction from preschool through eighth grade, but there are also some secondary schools. Their average enrollment is between 100 and 149 students, ranging from 22 to over 800.

Approximately one-half the schools are religious and one-half secular. Most of them enroll more than 80 percent African-American youth, and their curricula stress a cultural emphasis that specifically affirms the racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds of their students. They have the characteristics of a neighborhood school, with small classes and pupil-teacher ratios.

Their most distinguishing feature is their operational autonomy, independent of financial and management controls by larger religious or secular organizations. They rely primarily on tuition, which provides 71 percent of their budgets.

The schools serve a broad cross-section of economic groups, although 87 percent of the families have incomes of less than $49,000 annually and 57 percent earn less than $30,000, and 24 percent less than $15,000. Most of these families live fewer

than three miles from the school, although some families earning over $50,000 annually travel up to 21 miles daily to bring their children to school.

The most frequently cited reasons for choosing a school involve the nature of the learning environment in an independent school. Families frequently mentioned that they were drawn to these schools as one way to get away from the devastating effects of public schools. The second reason is usually the quality of the academic program. Less frequently mentioned, although still important, is the way in which these schools affirm the child's cultural background, the religious teachings and affliations of religious schools, and the low cost of tuition.

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DARE TO CHOOSE:

Parental Choice at Independent Neighborhood Schools

by Joan Davis Ratteray and Mwalimu Shujaa

I: OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS

A 1982 report identified over 300 independent schools that are meeting the academic and social needs of African-American, Hispanic/Latino-American, Native-American, and Asian-American children.[1] These institutions are located in urban areas all across America, and some of them are in the poorest inner-city neighborhoods.[2] This preliminary information led the investigators for the present study to make a number of assumptions that were used to develop the goals and objectives of the study, as well as the research design.

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[1]Ratteray, Joan (1982). Alternative Educational Options for Minorities and the Poor. Internal report for the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise, Washington, DC.

[2]These schools are called "independent neighborhood schools" because they are perceived to be neighborhood-based, self-help responses to educational needs that are not being met by large public school systems. The term "neighborhood" also distinguishes these schools from the more traditional private schools, those which are either part of an organized parochial school system or those with primarily White enrollment and generally considered to be "elite" schools serving children from the most affluent families.

A. Assumptions

The assumptions made in the development of this study were concerned with sample size, study approach, and instrument design, as follows:

1. Sample Size. The size of the population of independent schools is unknown, although one study did find approximately 300, and reasoned estimates could generate a considerably higher figure. Moreover, the population size may never be known, for such research would require considerably more than the limited resources available to the Institute for this initial study. The following design factors, therefore, must be considered:

a. This research is primarily descriptive, and makes no attempt to speak for all minority-group independent schools;

b. Our sample needs to be sufficiently large to support data cross-tabulations and to engender confidence that our descriptions are valid;

c. Since no population projections are to be made, there is no need for or capacity to perform statistical tests to determine size;

d. The number of schools included in the sample will be a function of the level of cooperation from the schools and the resources available to make follow-up calls; and while our target should be 100 schools, our data would retain its integrity with as few as 50 schools in our sample;

2. Study Approach. A case-study approach is utilized, generating data that are comparable across sites but making no attempt to compare sites.

The written surveys rely primarily on structured-response questions, allowing respondents the ability to give numerical responses, to use rating scales, or to select from yes or no options.

There are also open-ended questions, so that administrators and families[3] are free to volunteer explanations, such as what administrators believe their schools offer and why families themselves say they chose these schools. The method of questioning in the oral interviews follows a uniform set of questions as a guide but also stimulates responses that are both frank and volunteered.

These interviews are transcribed and subjected to a content analysis, as follows: Significant comments by the informants are identified; the comments are extracted; similar comments are classified under appropriate subject headings; and finally, the comments are incorporated into the text of this report. The written responses to open-ended questions are classified in the same manner as the interview data and assigned numerical codes for the purpose of entering those subject

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[3]The term "parents" was used originally in the proposal and in the grant instrument and, therefore, is retained in the title of this report. Throughout the text of the report, however, the more appropriate terms "families" and "households" are used.

headings into a computerized database.

It should be noted that the subject headings used in data classification, while selected by the investigators, emerge from the comments of the respondents themselves. These terms become "analytic domains," as that term is used in ethnographic research to infer cultural meanings from folk responses.[4]

This approach allows respondents to use their own words, without being led by the investigators to give certain types of answers. It is particularly important in this study because members of the study team, in their professional careers, have had many years of experience in school administration, classroom teaching, and education policy analysis. The use of open-ended questions enables them to keep their personal insights secondary to the data being gathered from the respondents and to permit the research conclusions to be more firmly grounded in those data.

3. Instrument Design. The data collection instruments are to be judged on the basis of their face validity -- the extent to which the questions, as worded, measure what we think we are measuring. Since there is no real test of reliability, the questionnaires were pretested and expert opinion judged their technical soundness. In addition, the questions are multiple

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[4]Spradley, James P. (1980). Participant Observation (pp. 90-93). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

choice or use standard scaling techniques, which is appropriate since the data are used to prepare a descriptive report. The units of analysis are the responses by the school administrators and the families.

The specific questions utilized should yield data that address the following assumptions:

a. The schools are apparently clustered in cultural and religious groups, although the importance of these characteristics and their relationship to each other were not known prior to the study, and families are at least specifically looking for school environments where values are taught to their children.

b. The educational experiences of the families must be great motivating forces in choosing how their children will be educated.

c. A school's ability to grow within its community could be the result of how well that school's administration understood and tried to meet the needs of the families being served.

d. The demographics of urban neighborhoods where these schools seem to be located should produce a sample of families in the low-to-moderate income range, with a corresponding level of career achievement.

e. It is inappropriate for the investigators to discuss such currently controversial topics as vouchers, tuition tax credits, busing, desegregation, and church/state relationships unless they are first raised by the families themselves.

Starting with these assumptions, we developed a study with the following goals, objectives, and design.

B. Project Goals and Objectives

The goal of the present study is to gain a better understanding of the dynamics of choice in how families select independent neighborhood schools. The objectives which the project emphasized are:

1. To classify the schools by type of philosophy and by their staffing, enrollment, curriculum, and other policies;

2. To identify the outcomes families considered in selecting independent neighborhood schools for their children;

3. To determine what relationship, if any, exists between the expectations of families and the types of schools they choose;

4. To identify socially-determined perceptions, other than anticipated outcomes, that may have contributed to the choices families made; and

5. To disseminate information about the project to a wide audience.

C. Project Design

The study was conducted in five phases: a telephone verification of schools, followed by a written survey of the schools, a written survey of families whose children attend some of these schools; in-depth oral interviews of some school administrators and families; and data analysis. The role of compensation for data provided is also described in this section.

Phase 1

The first phase required telephone verification of 220 independent schools (Objective #1). They were identified from sources that included several hundred schools on a list that had been widely disseminated in 1982, numerous schools that had been referred to the investigators since that time, and others that were discovered by referral during the verification process.

The phone calls were made in May 1986. We discovered that collecting data at this stage was difficult because the first person to answer the telephone was not usually capable of or authorized to provide the information we needed. Because of staffing shortages, administrators wore many hats, sometimes teaching, sometimes organizing the staff and monitoring the premises, and sometimes actually making repairs to the physical plant. Some schools had no secretarial help, and messages were left on an answering machine until someone could return the call.

Eventually, we made contact with the administrator or with someone else designated to answer questions, such as an administrative assistant, a secretary, or a teacher. Each interview lasted from 15 to 30 minutes. Respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and asked to provide information about the length of time the school had been in operation, the size of enrollment, the grade span, the ethnic or racial composition of students, accreditation status, size of the

faculty, and the tuition. The accuracy of the mailing address also was checked. A copy of the telephone survey "Fact Sheet" and interview guidelines used may be found in Appendix I.

Some of the schools on the original list were found to be closed, and they were removed from the list. Also removed from consideration were all schools that were not five-day schools, such as "Saturday schools," "weekend schools," after-school programs, and other tutorial programs. It was the opinion of the research staff that a basic criterion for inclusion in the study would be that each school represented an institution where families could exercise choice among full-time educational options, such as public, parochial, traditional "elite" private schools, and the independent neighborhood schools.

Phase 2

The second phase was concerned with describing the characteristics of independent neighborhood schools (Objectives #1 and 2). A survey form, accompanied by a postage-paid Business Reply Mail envelope, was mailed to approximately 211 schools identified as offering a full-time, five-day-a-week program.

These survey forms were mailed immediately after the telephone verification. Unfortunately, the timing of this data collection coincided with school closing, graduation exercises, and the beginning of summer vacation. Consequently, most of the

initial mailing was either put on hold by the administrators or completely lost.

Follow-up calls were made, and some returned their forms at this point. Others begged our indulgence and recommended that we resubmit the form at the beginning of the school year. Some of the schools were known to be in summer session, however, and they were sent postcard reminders to return the questionnaires. At the beginning of the school year, additional follow-up calls were made to reacquaint the administrators with the project and our goals. We personally urged them to respond by filling out the questionnaire. This level of telephone contact continued through October 1986.

Finally, information was collected from administrators at 75 schools, which represents 36 percent of the schools that were solicited. Respondents included schools from the 220 first solicited, plus additional institutions that subsequently came to the attention of the investigators. An effort was made to reach schools from a broad number of cultural groups, as identified initially in the sample of 220 schools. However, the 75 respondents were primarily from schools serving African-Americans, as discussed further in the "Major Findings" section of this report.

The survey consisted of both structured-response and open-ended items. The 40 structured-response items on the instrument are, designed to show how the schools varied with

regard to student body, staffing, length of operation, attendance area, physical structure, curriculum focus, funding patterns, and target community. There are also four open-ended questions, intended to collect data in words of the respondents' own choosing, as well as through some rating scales, on eight areas: how administrators described and classified their schools (which also helped to clarify and/or validate similar structured-response items), what they expected students to know and what they believed families wanted, the nature of their school's affiliation with any other group, the nature of any curriculum emphases on religion or culture, types of holidays celebrated, as well as the teaching approaches utilized. A copy of the school survey instrument may be found in Appendix II.

At the end of the survey form, the administrators were assured that their responses would not be identified with their particular institution. They were also told that for the next phase of the study, the Institute would choose a representative sample of families from among the schools responding to the second phase. The schools were asked to indicate if they would like to participate in the next phase by answering "Yes," "Not sure, please provide more details," or "No." Those schools responding "Yes" were immediately included in the sample for the third phase.

Schools responding "Not sure, please provide more details" were sent a letter on October 15th. We described the

keep track of the names of families who received the forms and a chronological series of code numbers assigned to those families. Finally, administrators were asked to name a contact person to ensure that the forms were sent out and to notify the Institute of that person's name and address.

A written survey consisted of a cover letter and survey form containing 14 structured-response and four open-ended questions. The structured-response items were to validate some of the information gathered in the second phase and to provide information that could be used to construct a demographic profile of school families, such as the size of the family, the occupations and income of family members, the amount of the family budget being allocated for education expenditures, the educational background of parents, the distance families live from the school, the ethnic and cultural group of the parents, the family's perception of the school's institutional affiliation, and the level of participation by family members in the school experiences of their children.

The open-ended questions required families to put their answers in their own words, which is the same process used to gather information from administrators on schools in Phase 2 of this study.[6] These questions elicited responses on what families expect their children to know after attending the

[6]After the responses were received from the families, it became apparent that Question 4 was ambiguous and respondents had misinterpreted the question. Results from this item were discarded.

program again, emphasizing both the small size of the parental survey form and the manner in which schools would be compensated for forms received. They were then asked to complete a name-and-address coupon requesting copies of the parental survey. This coupon is in Appendix III.

Phase 3

In the third phase of the study, a written survey gathered more information on the families of children enrolled in the schools and elicited their perceptions of the school (Objectives 1 and 2). This survey was completed by 399 families.[5]

The enrollment of each school, as verified by the telephone survey and written survey, was used to determine the number of forms each school was entitled to give to their families. In mid-October, school administrators were sent detailed and simplified instructions for randomly choosing their family sample. Schools with enrollment of under 200 students were asked to provide forms to 20 percent of their families. An arbitrary ceiling of 40 names was placed on schools with enrollment over 200.

They were also sent a convenient form on which they could

[5]Since the closing date for data analysis, approximately 20 additional parent survey forms and several school survey forms have been received, and others continue to arrive.

independent neighborhood school they chose, why they chose the school, how they learned about the school.

Each form was numbered with a code identifying the school and one of the code numbers assigned to that school for each of their participating families. Each form was stapled to one of the Institute's postage-paid Business Reply Mail envelopes. This procedure was designed to protect the confidentiality of the family data, because while the schools kept a master list of the families to whom forms were distributed, the forms themselves were returned directly to the Institute in sealed envelopes. A few schools, however, collected the forms from families in sealed envelopes and forwarded the batch to the Institute. A handful of schools actually returned their master list to the Institute. A copy of the family survey instrument, called a "Parent Questionnaire," as well as related instructions to administrators, may be found in Appendix IV.

Phase 4

The fourth phase of the study was to conduct in-depth interviews of selected families to validate, clarify or add to certain types of information that could not be adequately covered in the written instruments of the previous phases (Objectives #2, 3 and 4). This phase was conducted in four steps: pre-interview

session in which the investigators were trained in professional ethnographic interview techniques (held in September 1986), a trial session at one school site in which the investigators tested the questions they wanted to ask families (October 1986), a debriefing session in which the investigators reviewed the adequacy and effectiveness of the questions (October 1986), and the remainder of the formal series of family interviews at nine more schools (November 1986 through February 1987).

Thirty-five families were chosen from 10 schools in the following manner:

A. The 75 schools responding to Phase 1 were divided into those that were either "religious" or "secular."[7] These two groups were further divided into a) religious schools that stressed a specific cultural or ethnic curriculum orientation and those that did not,[8] and b) secular schools that stressed a specific cultural or ethnic curriculum orientation and those that did not.

B. A determination was made that a sample of 40 schools would adequately represent the larger group of 75. The schools responding "Yes" they wished to continue in the study were

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[7]This terminology was derived from the responses of administrators, classifying their schools at Questions 5 and 7 on the school survey (Appendix II). For a detailed discussion of this approach, see "A Religious or Secular Approach," under "Responses of Administrators" in the "Major Findings" section of this report.

[8]For a discussion of the culture/non-culture parameters, see "Racially/Ethnically Homogeneous Enrollments," under "Responses of Administrators" in the "Major Findings" section.

immediately placed in one of the four quadrants just identified. Those responding "Maybe" were further solicited and, after agreeing to continue, were placed in their appropriate quadrant. The 75 schools, representing at least 12,000 students, were distributed among the four quadrants shown in Figure 1.

C. Before the entire 40 survey forms had arrived in the mail, a preliminary analysis of 38 schools was made to determine whether we were getting a geographic distribution that was consistent with the distribution of the original 220 schools verified as existing in Phase 1. Confirmation that this was indeed the case is shown in Table 1.

D. From the 40 schools, a total of 10 schools were randomly selected as representing the four quadrants and various regions of the United States. The 10 schools from which a parent sample for in-depth interviews would be solicited are, as follows:

1. Accounters Preparatory Academy (Illinois)
2. Bethel Christian School (Maryland)
3. El Savior Academy, West Miami (Florida)
4. Excelsior School (Georgia)
5. Hope Academy (California)
6. International Preparatory Institute (Georgia)
7. Roots Activity Learning Center (District of Columbia)
8. Sheenway School and Culture Center (California)
9. Tabernacle Christian Academy (Illinois)
10. Xavier Preparatory School (Louisiana)

The administrators at each of these schools were asked to select for in-depth interviews at least one family member (one father and/or mother, or one guardian) from each of the following

Figure 1

DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOLS AS RELIGIOUS OR SECULAR, WITH AN EMPHASIS ON CULTURE IN THE CURRICULUM

(n = 75)

	CULTURAL FACTORS IN CURRICULUM	
	Specific Ethnic/ Cultural Curriculum	No Specific Ethnic/ Cultural Curriculum
Religiously-Affiliated	Group I (11 schools)	Group III (22 schools)
Secular	Group IV (19 schools)	Group II (23 schools)

Table 1

DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOLS BY PERCENTAGE IN U.S. GEOGRAPHIC REGIONS

Geographic Region	SAMPLE SIZE AT TWO PHASES Phase 1 (n=220)	Phase 4 (n=38)
Northeast	38%	37%
Southeast	18%	24%
Central	26%	24%
West	14%	10%
Southwest	5%	5%
	100%	100%

NOTE:

Phase 1 = Telephone Verification (May 1986)

Phase 4 = Family Interviews (October 1986 to February 1987)

types of families at their schools:

> **A. In a leadership group** -- a family member who holds an office in the school structure or parent-teacher organization, or who regularly assists with administration or teaching, etc.
>
> **B. Active non-leader** -- a family member who regularly attends meetings, serves on committees, etc.
>
> **C. Inactive** -- A family member who attends few meetings and does not serve on committees.
>
> **D. Established** -- a family member whose child has been at the school for at least two full years.
>
> **E. New** -- a family member whose child has been at the school for less than one full year.

It was anticipated that families in groups D and E would also be in groups A, B, or C. Interviews were also conducted with the administrators and, if time permitted and others were available, with teachers and students as well. As a result of this process, 35 separate family interviews were conducted, as shown in Table 2.

Nearly all of the interviews were held on school premises, but some were held in the homes of families for their convenience. Some schools were visited as a courtesy by the investigative team when they happened to be in the same city and when it was considered appropriate to promote interest in the research or to give fuller representation to the types of independent schools in particular areas.

Table 2

DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

SCHOOLS	Families	Administrators	Teachers	Students
1. Accounters Prep.	4	2	2	2
2. Bethel Chr. Sch.	4	2	3	3
3. El Savior Academy	0	1	1	0
4. Excelsior School	3	1	0	2
5. Hope Academy	4	1	2	2
6. Intern'l Prep Sch.	4	1	1	1
7. Roots Activ. Lrng.	5	1	1	2
8. Sheenway School	3	2	1	1
9. Tabernacle Ch. Ac.	4	2	2	2
10. Xavier Prep School	4	1	2	2
11. St. Augustine H.S.	0	1	1	0
Total	35			

Families, administrators, teachers, and students granted interviews after the investigators assured families that their names would not be identified with their comments.

Each interview took approximately 30 minutes. The interview questions explored the contexts in which families make their choices, what expectations and outcomes they had about the educational experience, as well as how these concerns are related to the types of schools that are chosen. Also, there were in-depth interviews from some administrators, teachers and students to clarify how the types of schools, staffing, enrollment were correlated to the choices these families make.

The interviews were projected as friendly conversations designed to stimulate discussion and elicit maximum frank response, although a set of basic questions was used to guide the conversation in each instance. Most of the interviews were conducted when Investigators Ratteray and Shujaa were present at the same time in the interview room. In some instances there was one family member being interviewed, and sometimes two were present. In at least one instance, teachers and their administrator were interviewed in a group. The basic interview questions are shown in Appendix VI.

The interviews were recorded, and over 1500 pages of verbatim transcripts were prepared. Each transcript was subjected to the content analysis described in the "Assumptions" section of this report.

In addition to conducting interviews, the investigators were able to observe some of the classes in session and even to conduct some classes. This made it possible for the investigators to gain first-hand impressions about the organization of the school and the intellectual development of some of the students.

Phase 5

The fifth phase of the study consisted of the data analysis. The responses to each questionnaire were entered in a computerized database, then analyzed with a spreadsheet, with the software program known as the Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS/PC+), and manually.

The responses to questions requiring quantitative answers were entered directly. Responses to open-ended questions were manually classified by the investigators, and codes representing the answers grouped by type were entered in the database, as previously described.

A preliminary manual analysis of some of the school questionnaires began in June and July 1986, as soon as approximately 60 forms had been received. This was necessary to finalize a decision on the detailed analyses that would be required. Unfortunately, because the research was off schedule, it was not possible to have the benefit of a computerized

analysis of the schools before posing questions to the families during the in-depth interviews. The open-ended questions to the administrators, such as those dealing with the school philosophy, student composition, and educational background of family members provided valuable insights in phrasing some of the questions posed to during the parent interviews.

The quantitative school survey analysis began in February 1987, followed by the parent survey analysis in March and April. In some instances, it was necessary to establish only lists, frequencies, and means. In others, cross-tabulations were performed to explore possible relationships and to test theories that were emerging as the research progressed.

After reviewing the results of their quantitative and qualitative investigations and assessing them in light of the historical background to independent education, the study team was able to prepare the findings and conclusions presented in this report.

Compensation

No compensation was paid to the schools for their completion of the initial survey of schools, nor were administrators informed at this point that compensation would be forthcoming at a later stage in the process of data collection.

To ensure that the largest possible number of parent survey forms were returned, however, schools were paid $5.00 for each questionnaire completed by their families. Schools were notified of this after they agreed to participate in the family-survey phase. Families were informed by cover letter that their sending the form to the Institute would result in a contribution to their child's school.

In addition, the contact person at each school where families participated was paid $25.00 for maintaining the records and getting the families to respond.

Finally, schools were paid a flat fee of $100 if their facilities were used by the investigators to conduct the in-depth interviews of families, and schools received $20 for each family participating in the in-depth interviews.

II: HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL CONTEXT FOR THE EMERGENCE OF INDEPENDENT NEIGHBORHOOD EDUCATION

Independent neighborhood schools in America have a long history, dating back to the Revolutionary War. They are an important expression of self-help, especially among African-Americans. This racial, ethnic and cultural group at first wanted to gain access to mainstream education. Some who gained access were so disillusioned when it became clear that the system could never meet their academic and cultural needs, withdrew and started to build their own institutions.

It has been said that the purpose of education is "intrasocietal integration," the process by which societies enable their members to learn, develop and maintain throughout their life cycle the motivation to participate in socially valued and controlled patterns of action.[9] This type of definition, however, promotes both a passive and a statist perspective, where education for an individual or group of individuals is to be provided by society (i.e. the state), and those persons, at the mercy of society, are forced to accept what society chooses to make available for its own perpetuation and maintenance.

An opposing view would hold that the purpose of education is not to integrate the components of a society merely for that

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[9]Parsons, Talcott (1966). Societies: Evolutionary and Comparative Perspectives (pp 5-18). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

society's self-preservation but to give individuals the tools with which they can educate themselves and go beyond the parameters established and institutionalized by society, even so far as granting the freedom either to work with the existing society and reshape it into a new and structurally different one or to create a separate entity that coexists within or beside the parent society. In this view, a member of society is not merely a passive vessel but a proactive individual who is capable of understanding and fusing the needs of his or her group and the larger society.

Thus, the issues governing education are all issues of cultural dominance and power, a constant struggle between the society as a whole and its members, between subgroups, and between individuals. They are issues of:

* **access** (<u>whether</u> certain categories of people should receive a serious academic education at all);

* **content** (<u>what</u> is to be taught);

* **context** (<u>how</u> and from which <u>perspective</u> it is to be taught).

These issues relentlessly drive the educational machinery toward its ultimate goal of training individuals for the degrees of power they must assume and balance against each other.

The issues of access, content and context in education have affected all the ethnic and racial groups who now find themselves outside the "mainstream" in American society. Yet, while they have been different for each of the various groups, it

may be that the differences are only in superficial details, such as the times of the events, the geographical locations where they occur, and the casts of characters involved. To shorten our discussion, however, the nature and scope of these issues can be illustrated by examining the particular experience of one group, Americans of African descent.

A Question of Access

The first issue to consider in discussing American education is one of access, for the concept of today's independent neighborhood school had its beginnings in the efforts of African-Americans to educate themselves during periods when the question was whether any type would be available to them.

Education always has been important to African-Americans, and whenever the state has failed to provide it, the private sector offered alternatives. This was true in America's early years, and it can be seen illustrated again in the period after World War II. Both of these periods are significant because African-Americans had high expectations for their role in society.

Following the Revolutionary War, American nationalists wanted to consolidate a fragile republic that easily could have been shattered by internal disorders and factions. Educational

theorists of the period, therefore, were concerned with building institutions. One such institution designed to reinforce the ideals of the young republic began to emerge by 1820 and was known as the "common schools." These schools were later changed to embody the "institutional structure and ideology of public education."[10] These common and public schools were the medium by which subsequent European immigrants and their descendants assimilated into the mainstream society dominated by their fellow Europeans.

During the period when the common school movement was taking shape for European-Americans, the formal education of African-Americans was considered unnecessary. African-Americans were believed to be intellectually inferior, their education would make them less useful as workers, and by encouraging discontent and rebellion, their education would be a threat to the social order.[11] Thus, the national commitment to disparate treatment and to dual-track Americanization became deeply embedded in education policymaking.

Some of the schools that were created in response to the issue of access were started by European-Americans, but others were started by African-Americans who formed mutual benefit

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[10]Tyack, David B. (1967). Turning Points in American Educational History. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

[11]Ogbu, John (1978). Minority Education and Caste (p. 105). New York: Academic Press.

associations that emphasized education.[12]

At least one the schools that was started by Whites led to the creation of true self-help institutions. For example, Anthony Benezet in 1770 started a school for Blacks in Philadelphia. One of his students was Richard Allen, who later founded the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church,[13] and his church later became actively involved in education.

Prince Hall, a free African in America, a Revolutionary War veteran, and founder of Freemasonry for African-Americans, in 1798 started a school in his son's Boston home because the city refused to establish a regular school for Black children who lived in that city.[14] He was inspired by the fact that Benezet had started schools for African-American children in Philadelphia, but his school is believed to be the first of its kind to be owned and operated by African Americans.

An important theme in Prince Hall's approach is self-help. He urged his fellow African-Americans to give up "recreations and superfluities, so that we may have the money to

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[12]Bond, Horace Mann. (1934). The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order (p.370). New York: Prentice Hall. See also: Woodson, Carter G. (1919). The Education of the Negro Prior to 1861 (p. 146). Washington, D.C.: Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History.

[13]DuBois, W. E. B. (1938). How Negroes Have Taken Advantage of Educational Opportunities Offered by Friends. Journal of Negro Education, 7(2), p. 126.

[14]Wesley, Charles H. (1983). Prince Hall: Life and Legacy (2nd ed.). Chicago: Drew Sales Lodge Regalia.

educate our rising generation." His call was heeded, and enrollment grew dramatically.

In 1829 Elizabeth Clovis Lange, an educated woman who had come to Baltimore from Haiti via Cuba, became Sister Mary, one of the first novices in the Oblate Sisters of Providence, a new order of Black nuns in the Roman Catholic church. In that same year, she became superior general of the order and immediately opened a school that is known today as St. Frances-Charles Hall Academy. Her co-founder, a French priest named Father Joubert, defied his contemporaries "who were holding that blacks had neither souls to be saved nor minds to be instructed."[15] Together, they developed a curriculum for Blacks that could "meet, if not excell, those offered by the schools of the city,"[16] and the children were taught by the sisters with whom they lived.

African-Americans retained their capacity for self-help in education well into the twentieth century. They were eager to learn, even if they had to do it by self-study. As Berry and Blassingame (1982) put it, African-Americans in the 1860s "did not wait for the federal government to guarantee their education...They built schools and paid teachers...or refused to

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[15]Lancaster, Sr. M. Wilhelmina (1979). Our Foundress, Our Founder. 150th Anniversary: Oblate Sisters of Providence. Baltimore: Oblate Sisters of Providence.

[16]Smith, Sr. Naomi, ibid.

vote for politicians who would not support black schools."[17]

The coming of World War II widened the national and international horizons of many African-Americans. Those who served, as well as members of their families and their friends, developed rising expectations that they would be entitled to enjoy increased participation in American society. It should also be noted that one of the findings of the present study is that many independent schools were created in the years after World War II. Writing about this period, Lerone Bennett states:

> A great many things had changed in America; a great many things had changed in the world. After V-J Day, the Negro and white man faced each other over a new set of relationships. The biggest and most obvious element in that change was World War II.[18]

Dissatisfaction with social conditions led to increased activism among African-Americans, who hoped to produce social change. A child born in 1945, at the end of World War II, would see this activism produce strategies that changed the Nation. Before reaching 12 years of age, he or she experienced the impact of the U.S. Supreme Court decision in Brown v. Topeka Board of Education and the successful bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama.

The persistent concern for access was not limited to

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[17]Berry, Mary Frances and Blassingame, John W. (1982). Long Memory: The Black Experience in America (pp. 262-267). New York: Oxford University Press.

[18]Bennett, Lerone (1966). Before the Mayflower: A History of the Negro in America 1619-1964 (p. 304). Baltimore: Penguin Books.

students. It also extended to African-American teachers and administrators, who had also worked to gain access, only to find that they had been given highly visible positions but no substantive control. Finally, they were allowed to make major policy decisions without the assistance of Whites.[19] This debate over Black control at Black institutions reached a peak in the 1920s,[20] only to emerge again in the 1960s and 1970s.

During the headlong rush to desegregate, many people believed they were actually integrating with the mainstream. They seemed oblivious to the not-so-subtle distinction between the concepts, anxious to embrace what others apppeared to be enjoying as "the American Dream." With the Brown decision, the "integrationists" had taken control of the debate on access, but the price of their victory has been very high. In spite of all the past efforts to establish independent institutions, many African-Americans went in the opposite direction. They began by gradually surrendering their independent options in favor of public education. With no market to sustain them, large numbers of black-owned private schools and colleges were closed.[21]

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[19]McPherson, op. cit.

[20]Barry and Blassingame, op cit., p. 278. See also: Bond, Horace, Mann (1934). Education of the Negro in the American Social Order. New York: Prentice-Hall.

[21]Ratteray, Joan (1986, March/April). Independent Schools: Challenge Reborn. American Visions, pp. 55-56.

In assessing the struggle for access, W. E. B. DuBois stated:

> There are going to be schools which do not discriminate against colored people and the number is going to increase slowly in the present, but rapidly in the future until long before the year 2000, there will be no school segregation on the basis of race. The deficiency in knowledge of Negro history and culture, however will remain and this danger must be met or else American Negroes will disappear. Their history and culture will be lost. Their connection with the rising African world will be impossible. What then can we do or should we try to do?[22]

DuBois, therefore, was one of the first to note that problems of content and context in public education had been left unresolved.

An Issue of Content

The second issue in American education is one of content or what will be taught in schools, especially government schools because they are directly supported by taxation and the issue can be more easily debated in a public and political forum.

The issue arises because the early educational leaders of the United States established a system of education that had its roots in the northern European tradition. Some of the earliest monocultural sentiments defining the concept of an American were

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[22]DuBois, W. E. B. (1973). The Education of Black People: Ten Critiques 1906-1960 (Herbert Aptheker, Ed.) p. 152. Amherst: University of Massachusetts.

expressed by John Jay, one of this Nation's Founding Fathers:

> ...Providence has been pleased to give this one connected country to one united people -- A people descended from the same ancestors, speaking the same language, professing the same religion, attached to the same principles of government, very similar in their manners and customs, and who, by their joint counsels, arms, and efforts, fighting side by side throughout a long and bloody war, have nobly established general liberty and independence.[23]

Some immigrants from southern Europe found that they were not welcomed by this "united people." Their Americanization was not always easy, as many first generation Italian parents in Boston's West End discovered. It was with great reluctance that they sent their children to public schools during the first half of this century, although ultimately, they were successfully integrated into their new society.

There was a boundary line, however, separating the Europeans from those whose ancestry lay outside the European tradition. Although Jay never anticipated that both the majority and minority would function side by side as part of the American body politic, let alone assume the image of a "melting pot," his message took on new strength and vitality.

Each cultural group that has come to America has had its unique difficulties in relating to the mainstream. The general inability of European Americans to cope with people who are different from them has resulted in fear of those differences,

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[23]Jay, John (1787). The Federalist (Paper No. II).

which in turn has produced two tracks to Americanization: one for Europeans and one for those who are not Europeans. Thus, African-Americans and others discovered that the education system produced, for them, results that were inconsistent with what they expected or had been led to expect.

Since the educational system was created by mainstream America to maintain the preeminence of Euro-American culture, the presence of large numbers of African-Americans could not be tolerated unless they became a part of or at least willingly imitated the Euro-American tradition as if it were their own. It was necessary to convince everyone that African and African-American culture were either inferior and not worth preserving or actually non-existent.[24] The seeds for the diminution of non-European cultures had been sown centuries earlier,[25] but bore tangible fruit in the eighteenth century, long before there were truly independent institutions.

An early manifestation was the dispute over whether the education of African-Americans should be "manual" or "classical." British missionaries started formal schools for Blacks in Philadelphia in 1758, in New York and Williamsburg in 1760, and in Newport in 1762, but their mandate from London specifically

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[24]Clarke, John Henrik (1986). African Contributions to Mathematics, Science, and Technology. In O. Ratteray (Ed.) Teaching Mathematics (pp. 12-19). Washington, DC: Institute for Independent Education.

[25]Van Sertima, Ivan (Ed.). (1986). African Presence in Early Europe. New Brunswick: Transaction Books.

was to be more concerned with converting Blacks to Christianity than for their temporal condition.[26] Mainstream America had made it clear that it had no intention of integrating African-Americans into the national character and offering them the same curriculum content as European immigrants.

During the years immediately following the Civil War, African-Americans were educated primarily by missionaries from the North, who also emphasized religious and moral training in their schools. These missionaries feared reprisals from Whites in the South who believed that a classical education would give African-Americans ideas about social equality.

With the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment in 1866, the white missionaries who had earlier opened schools changed the focus of the education they offered. They shifted toward the classical education popular in New England, which emphasized preparing African-Americans to attain access to the mainstream that was equal to that of Whites. This academic orientation was also emphasized throughout the Reconstruction period at schools established by benevolent Whites in cooperation with the Freedmen's Bureau and in the public school systems established by the Reconstruction legislatures.

By 1877, control of the legislatures in the South had

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[26]Van Horne, John C. (Ed.). (1985). Religious Philanthropy and Colonial Slavery: The American Correspondence of the Associates of Dr. Bray, 1717-1777. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

been returned to conservative Whites, who advocated for the next 20 years that African-American education should emphasize industrial or manual training, reserving academic education for Whites only. Their intent was to preserve the sharecropping system of southern agriculture by limiting academic education for African-Americans. In spite of this turning tide, the Oddfellows, a Masonic organization, reported that self-help in education was alive and well, for African-Americans had "acquired and controlled" 18 colleges, 34 academies, and 51 high schools and seminaries.[27]

Between 1900 and 1930, agriculture in the South endured difficult times. Many African-Americans migrated to industrial cities in the North, while the growing industrial base in the South also attracted migrants from the agricultural areas. African-American education during this period was intended to produce the following type of person:

> [One] who adapted well to the tenant system, who was "neither too illiterate to take advantage of his surrounding, nor more educated than is demanded by his dependent economic situation."[28]

From the 1930s until the early 1950s, when industrial development in the United States demanded more workers with

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[27]Grand United Order of Odd-Fellows in America. (1898). Report of the Ninth Biennial Meeting of the Grand United Order of Odd-Fellows in America. Philadelphia: Author.

[28]Ogbu, 1978. Op. cit., p. 113. Ogbu quotes from: Bond, Horace Mann (1966). The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order (p. 245). New York: Octagon.

industrial and manual training, this kind of education was considered inappropriate for African-Americans. Schools for African-Americans emphasized classical or academic training within their curricula, but did little to prepare their students to compete with Whites for industrial jobs.[29]

Thus, the dominant group has consistently utilized disparate treatment to legitimize their own positions of privilege and to prevent any challenge to the social order.

This feat was then and is today being accomplished by convincing the disadvantaged that their lot in life is inevitable, and therefore they should not expect more. In other words, the present condition of African-Americans is due to either a) the structural conditions of society over which one has no real control, or b) fatal flaws in their own character as individuals or to characteristics of all African-Americans that the individual has explicitly or implicitly inherited, as in "Black people can't do this..." or c) the wisdom of a "higher" moral authority who actually sanctions their condition as the best of all possible worlds -- the apex of Western civilization, for which they should be duly grateful.

Ogbu (1974) found evidence of the first type of fatalism in individuals he interviewed during a study of education in a

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[29]Ogbu, 1978. Op. cit., pp. 104-131. See also Woodson, Carter G. (1933). Miseducation of the Negro (pp. 17-37). Washington, DC: Associated Publishers.

low-income community.[30] He was examining the congruence he found between an individual's expectations that life will not change and the structural conditions of society that are perceived by the individual to restrict change. Frazier (1940) reported that he found the second type of self-defeating attitude among youth who also will not challenge the mainstream order in which they find themselves.[31] Both of these fatalistic perceptions derive from a position of social powerlessness.

The third example of fatalism is derived from the position of strength assumed by the mainstream cultural group. It can be inferred to be an inevitable consequence of some of the ideas on "common culture" now crystallizing among education policymakers.[32]

This particular approach to "common culture" exhalts "Western civilization that began in Greece and Rome." It links America's "ethical and moral foundations" to "the Greek and Judeo-Christian traditions," implying that Western civilization

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[30]Ogbu, John (1974). The Next Generation (p.66). New York: Academic Press.

[31]Ibid., p. 191, obtained from: Frazier, E. Franklin (1940). Negro Youth at the Crossways: Their Personality Development in the Middle States (pp. 136-137). Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

[32]Lind, William S. (1986, March). What is Cultural Conservatism? Eassays on Our Times. Washington, D.C.: Institute for Government and Politics. See also: Weyrich, Paul. (1986, May 5). The Cultural Right's Hot New Agenda. The Washington Post, p. C1. See: Finn, Chester (1986, November). Giving Shape to Cultural Conservatism. The American Spectator.

bears God's stamp of approval. Individuals might conclude, therefore, that they should not attempt to alter or diminish the privileged position of this Western civilization for which there is no "moral equivalent" in other cultural traditions. Thus, it can be said that the content and process of education are confined in a monocultural framework that is as narrow as that of John Jay.

Furthermore, not only does this form of monoculturalism generate fatalistic acceptance by the individuals discussed previously, but the inconsistency of its logic is self-destructive. Its advocates fail to point out that many of the claims to greatness and uniqueness by the civilizations of Greece and Rome are fraudulent.[33] Presenting such falsehoods as truth violates the very ethical and moral foundations of the Judeo-Christian traditions with which they are presumed to be linked. Unfortunately, when advocates of "common culture" pursue their logic, they risk losing potential supporters who are unable to reconcile the contradiction.

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[33]Cheikh Anta Diop (1962). The Cultural Unity of Negro Africa: The Domains of Patriarchy and of Matriarchy in Classical Antiquity. Paris: Presence Africaine. (Original work published 1959).

See also: Diop, Cheikh Anta. (1974). The African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality (Mercer Cook, Trans.). Westport: Lawrence Hill (Original work published in 1955 and 1967)

James, George G. M. (1976). Stolen Legacy. San Francisco: Julian Richardson Co.

Nichols, Edwin J. (1986). Cultural Foundations for Teaching Black Children. In O. Ratteray (Ed.), Teaching Mathematics (pp. 1-7). Washington, D.C.: Institute for Independent Education.

Even though mainstream America has made increasing concessions since the 1960s and 1970s, permitting the incorporation of references to the activities of African-Americans in some parts of the traditional curriculum, texts, and teaching materials at elementary, secondary, and higher-education levels, the overwhelming thrust of education, in access, content, and context is to exhalt the Euro-American tradition. This use of curriculum content, as a tool for maintaining societal privilege based on race, has played a decisive role in the education of African-Americans. It is a phenomenon that continues to be incorporated into education policymaking.

An Issue of Context

The third issue facing American education is one of process or the cultural perspective from which children will be taught. In response to a wide array of social forces, African-Americans have been forced to choose how they, as individuals and as a group, should relate to mainstream America on matters of context in education.

Some African-Americans, accepting the role that has been defined for them by the mainstream, have tried to stay within the limits that Euro-Americans have placed on educational content.

They have in fact conceded the supremacy of Euro-American traditions in the definition of what is a "good education," and their academic choices are identical to those of people who are born into the Euro-American mainstream. For them, the issue was resolved by pursuing learning within the mainstream educational system.

For others, it required some form of separation from the system in order to build institutions of their own. They have seen the need to respond to the social conditions that affect their cultural group and specifically the need to train young people in their communities how to respond to those social conditions. Therefore, they have withdrawn, voluntarily or against their will, from the European-American educational environments and started independent schools. Included in this group are those who have not only separated their schools from the state but from businesses, foundations, and other institutional arrangements which represent the structural conditions in American society.[34]

It is important to make two distinctions here between social protest and institution-building activities like the formation of independent neighborhood schools. Social protest

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[34]Structural conditions are the "institutional arrangements of human life that are constantly subjected to change." They are the economic, political, and social systems that "undergo transformation resulting from pressure for adaptive efficiency, such as modernization." See: Shimahara, Nobuo K. (1979). Adaptation and Education in Japan (p. 2). New York: Praeger.

is directed at a symbol of authority, but it cannot produce a change in the balance of power unless the desired outcome is "granted" by the authorities. Institution-building, on the other hand, is focused not on an opposing authority figure but on the internal development of the group. It is an act of self-empowerment that may or may not have the indirect effect of changing power relationships.

The second distinction is in the relationship between perception and reality. The objective to be achieved by social protest is perceived by the protesters to be in their best interest, such as picketing a store owner to force the hiring of more African-Americans. It does not necessarily challenge a power relationship. The objective of institution-building is to establish a new set of conditions, such as opening a competing store with different hiring practices. The latter provides short-term relief in employment as well as long-term stability for the group as a whole.

One of earliest expressions of a concern for context can be seen in the story of Richard Allen. He was trained in the teachings of the Methodist church in eighteenth century Philadelphia, but he soon learned a great deal about how Whites and Blacks had different perceptions of themselves and of each other. Whites parishoners in the church where he preached could no longer tolerate the fact that they were being numerically overwhelmed by the African presence of their fellow churchgoers.

The Europeans attempted to physically separate the Africans but keep them in the context of that European church organization.

Allen and others withdrew, founding the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1794. Because of Rev. Allen's belief that knowledge should be pursued with dignity and in an African context, the AME and AME Zion churches after his death bought or established four universities and colleges, as well as elementary and secondary schools.[35]

The treatment Richard Allen received is consistent with the observation that mainstream America has always had a perception of itself that has led to the exclusion of minority cultural groups, especially African-Americans, from general mainstream activities. That is to say, while Americans of European heritage were being groomed to accept the American national character and to define themselves as leaders, African-Americans were expected to accept an image of themselves as inferior beings whose place often was defined as being behind that of Whites.

Many others were later to withdraw from the education mainstream, but among those who withdrew, there never has been a consensus on exactly what they should teach in their physically separate environments. Nevertheless, there is considerable evidence that the central theme of their existence is their

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[35]McPherson, James M. (1970). White Liberals and Black Power in Negro Education, 1865-1915. American Historical Review, 75, 1357-1379.

Africanity or Negritude, concepts that had their roots in the Pan African movement led by W. E. B. DuBois and others. The term "Negritude" was coined in 1933 by the poet Aime Cesaire, and Diagne (1979) points out that the poet and African political leader Leopold Senghor subsequently defined it as:

> [T]he sum of the economic, political, intellectual, moral, artistic and social values, not only of the people of Black Africa, but also of the Black minorities in America, Asia and Oceania.[36]

Diagne further notes that "Negritude" is a universal term. "Africanity," on the other hand, is more specific:

> It designates the "Negro, Arab and Berber components of Africa. It stands for the sum of the African civilizational values, the body of qualities which make up the distinctiveness of the African personality. Africanity, says Senghor, means the acceptance of a fact; it also means the determination to build, by means of an African renaissance, a humanism that will be distinctly African and yet open to the rest of the world.

These African themes of Negritude and Africanity, grouped together for the purposes of our discussion here as "Africanness," historically have imposed a common cultural thread, a reason for existence among African-Americans. It is a cultural imperative to which each African-American must respond

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[36]Diagne, Pat (1979). African Renaissance and Cultural Issues. In Sow, Alpha, et al., Introduction to African Culture (pp. 125-184). Paris: UNESCO.]

in some manner,[37] and it has had an impact on the development of the entire independent neighborhood school movement.

An important part of this movement may be seen in the development of Muslim schools, which embodies issues of education context and content. These institutions, started by The Hon. Elijah Muhammad, have been in continuous operation since 1932. Muhammad had no faith in the ability of public schools to properly educate African-Americans. He believed that content and process of education in public schools were deficient and damaging, in that African-Americans were not being educated to inquire into their past, be proud of their heritage prior to slavery, think for themselves, or have a desire to become economically or otherwise independent.[38] He strenuously objected to the destructive moral values and behaviors, such as drug abuse, that were allowed to run rampant in public school settings. Further, as Imam to his followers, he specifically wanted to include the teachings of Islam in his curriculum, not only as a content area in and of itself, but as a means for shaping the context within which all other subjects are taught.

Alexander (1981) quotes Muhammad's teaching on "Knowledge to Benefit Self":

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[37]Stuckey, Sterling (1987). Slave Culture: Nationalist Theory and the Foundations of Black America. New York: Oxford University Press.

[38]Essien-Udom, E. U. (1962). Black Nationalism: A Search for an Identity in America. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

> ...First, my people must be taught the knowledge of self. Then, and only then will they be able to understand others and that which surrounds them...
>
> My people should get an education...which will make our people produce jobs for self and will make our people willing and able to go and do for self.
>
> I want an education for my people that will let them exercise the right of freedom. We are 100 years up from slavery. We are constantly told that we are free. Why can't we take advantage of that freedom?[39]

Dissatisfaction with the results obtained from public education was also expressed by African-American educators, such as Carter G. Woodson. It was Woodson's belief that if the public system of education could not be radically changed so that it would do a better job of preparing African-American youth to address the needs of their own community, it is necessary to develop a new system. In his classic text, The Mis-Education of the Negro,[40] he wrote:

> [The] educational system as it has developed both in Europe and America [is] an antiquated process which does not hit the mark even in the case of the needs of the white man himself. If the white man wants to hold on to it, let him do so; but the Negro, so far as he is able, should develop and carry out a program of his own.
>
> The so-called modern education, with all its defects, however, does others so much more good than it does the Negro, because it has been worked out in comformity to the needs of those

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[39]Alexander, E. Curtis. (1981). Elijah Muhammad on African American Education: A Guide for African And Black Studies Programs (pp. 77-78). New York: ECA Associates.

[40]Woodson, Op. cit. Preface, p. xxxii.

who have enslaved and oppressed weaker peoples.

Woodson's 1933 challenges to address the content and context of African-American education were not met. But 40 years later, one historian, articulating a consensus that emerged during the 1960s, placed the responsibility for change squarely on the shoulders of African-Americans educators themselves. He urged them to understand and define their own reality, then develop "a new grammar which transcends the inherent limitations of white categories."[41]

The dilemma of consensus development, among those who have withdrawn and among those who have not, has extended to all aspects of education, especially in the field of testing. There is agreement that testing has a useful role in society, but there is considerable disagreement over what constitutes a "fair" test. There is a need to find objective measures of perceived differences between individuals, using an instrument that does not promote disparate treatment for one cultural group as opposed to another.

Some African-Americans, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, objected to having the behavior of members of their group measured by instruments that were developed by and validated on European-Americans. They held that because test-makers did not

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[41]Bennett, Jr., Lerone (1972). The Challenge of Blackness (pp. 224-230). Chicago: Johnson Publishing Company.

recognize their own cultural bias, and because African-Americans have different experiences from European-Americans, the behaviors of the two groups cannot be measured by a common instrument.[42] Many African-Americans continue to disagree with this position, but between these two extremes are those who sometimes use common instruments and sometimes do not.

By the late 1960s, other efforts to bring about changes in public education included the movement for "community control" over schools. This reached its climax when parents in the Ocean Hill-Browsville area in New York City, demanded that they be given control over the affairs of schools that directly affected the lives of their children. This movement was aborted, however, by the New York Board of Education, who effectively changed the emphasis from community control to community involvement.[43]

Localities such as Chicago and the Watts section in Los Angeles also became involved in the issue of community control. In 1970, a conference was convened in East Palo Alto, California, co-sponsored by the California Association for Afro-American Education and Nairobi College. This conference was attended by representatives of more than 20 independent schools. Most of

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[42]X (Clark), Cedric; McGee, D. Phillip; Nobles, Wade; and Akbar, Na'im. (1976). Voodoo or IQ: An Introduction to African Psychology. Chicago: Institute of Positive Education.

[43]New York Civil Liberties Union. (1969). The Burden of Blame: A Report on the Ocean Hill-Brownsville School Controversy. In Marilyn Gittell and Alan G. Hevesi (Eds.), The Politics of Urban Education (pp. 338-351). New York: Praeger.

these schools had been founded in the late 1960s and marked the reintroduction of the concept of independent Black institutions.[44]

The New York based African American Teachers Association then convened, in 1972, a meeting that was attended by representatives of many of the same "freedom schools" that had attended the Nairobi College conference. Faced with the reality that public schools would be intransigent on the issue of control, the participants proposed the formation of the Council of Independent Black Institutions (CIBI).[45]

CIBI is today a technical assistance and teacher training organization, serving approximately 35 member schools and others. It currently focuses on developing curricula that blend an emphasis on quality academic preparation within an Afrocentric cultural and historical context.

The present study found evidence of Africanness among parents and administrators, even among those who do not classify their schools as following a "Pan-African" curriculum orientation. Some have responded to the theme of Africanness by embracing it wholeheartedly, feeling a need to return deep into

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[44]Afrik, Hannibal Tirus. (1981). Education for Self-Reliance, Idealism to Reality: An Analysis of the Independent Black School Movement (p. 13). Stanford: Council of Independent Black Institutions.

[45]Doughty, James Jefferson. (1973). A Historical Analysis of Black Education -- Focusing on the Contemporary Independent Black School Movement, pp. 91-94. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Ohio State University.

their roots, while some have approached it with ambivalence, and others have rejected it completely.

The majority of Americans today go to great lengths to defend public education, especially in inner-city areas, in spite of the effects of the system on African-Americans: Government schools continually graduate African-Americans with low perceptions of themselves, with inadequate academic skills, and unprepared to survive as employees, least of all as entrepreneurs, in a free-market economy. Moreover, significant change is unlikely because of numerous, complex institutional and legal barriers to change. America now has reached a point where most European-Americans, joined by many African-Americans, assume that the only place where America can help the masses of Black youngsters is within the sanctioned structure of mainstream education, delivered primarily through government schools.

While the debate over access has come full circle, the debate over content and context is still evolving, in counterpoint and on a separate track. Many African-Americans recognize that they once again must try to decide on the proper balance between European-American and African-American curriculum components. They must decide for themselves how far they, individually or collectively, must withdraw from the mainstream in order to achieve "a good education." They must also decide how to preserve the African-American context in a world that is being changed rapidly by technology.

III: MAJOR FINDINGS

The present study asks families, through both survey questionnaires and in-depth interviews, why they choose independent schools for their children. Their responses are balanced against the responses of school administrators, some teachers, and students who were asked for their perceptions of why families choose their schools. Subject to certain limitations in the design of the study, the following information emerged as a result of this approach.

LIMITATIONS ON THE FINDINGS

As the data were collected, it became apparent that there were certain limitations in the design of the study that needed to be considered in presenting the findings and conclusions of the study team. These limitations arise from the need for confidentiality, the level of response from various cultural groups, the types of programs that were appropriate to study, the timing of the research, and the phrasing of certain questions.

Confidentiality. One of the most important limitations was the need to assure respondents of the confidentiality of their individual responses. Therefore, when we discuss the comments of respondents, we do not identify them by name with

their comments. In addition, the Institute has not received permission from the schools to publish their names and addresses in any list.

Cultural Groups. Ever since our initial identification of these independent neighborhood schools, African-American institutions have been numerically predominant. Other cultural groups were also identified as operating independent institutions, even though they did not appear to be in the numbers found in African-American communities. Therefore, the outreach for the present study was designed to include schools operated for African-American, Hispanic-Americans, Asian-Americans, and Native-Americans as American cultural minority groups.

Responses were received primarily from the African-American population. Most of the remaining schools operated by cultural groups other than African-Americans simply did not respond to our survey. However a few schools from these groups did, and they were allowed to remain in the sample. Their numbers are too few to significantly change the results had we decided to exclude them. In addition, because several African-American schools did not respond, this study does not speak definitively for all African-American independent neighborhood institutions.

Type of Program. The scope of the study was also affected by the determination that many schools did not operate

five days a week. We excluded over 100 schools by Asian-Americans, known as the Chinese and Korean "weekend schools," some African-American tutorial programs and weekend schools, and many "contract schools" operated by Native Americans through the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Research Timetable. Another factor affecting the findings was the momentum of the research due to its timing. Because we were unable to send out the survey forms until May and June of 1986, many forms were not returned before the summer holidays began. Some forms were lost and additional copies were sent to some schools during the summer and at the beginning of the next school year in September. These were inopportune times for some schools that had other priorities. Extensive telephone calls by the investigators were necessary in order to produce an adequate response, and an even better response might have been forthcoming had the timing of the study been different.

Unclear Questions. Finally, the responses of administrators and families to one questionnaire item must be viewed with caution, while another could not be included at all, either as data items in the findings or in cross-tabulation with other variables. Question 31 on the school survey form (Appendix II) did not provide respondents with adequate criteria for identifying the quantity and quality of the resources and materials schools had, such as audiovisual equipment, a library, and so on. We know from our personal experience, for example,

that some schools have only a few shelves in an open classroom designated as a "library," while others have a separate room and staff dedicated to this purpose.

We completely rejected the responses to Question 4 on the parent survey form (Appendix IV) because it was apparent that respondents were misinterpreting the question. Finally, we were unable to identify which families are headed by single parents or guardians.

In spite of these limitations, we are confident about our ability to make the findings we present in this report on our survey of school administrators and our survey of families.

DATA FROM SURVEY OF SCHOOLS

This project identifies the characteristics that each independent neighborhood school assumes in varying degrees and clarifies the distinctions that exist between the schools. Our findings are presented here in two parts: a summary description of the schools, a detailed analysis of the school characteristics as measured by the responses of administrators to the questionnaire.

A. SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF SCHOOLS

Independent neighborhood schools are educating African-American, Hispanic/Latino-American, Native American, and Asian-American children who live primarily in urban areas across America. There are some high schools, but most of them focus on elementary grades, when an academic experience can come early enough in the life of a child to make a difference. Although there are many reasons why they have been created, a common thread is that families and teachers have decided that there needs to be some alternative to public education.[46]

While these schools are also different from their traditional private-sector counterparts, such as parochial schools, secular private schools for the elite, and schools known as "alternative schools,"[47] the public is generally unaware of the rich variety of choices they offer. Official records of the Federal Government and the States tend to provide only rough distinctions, usually identifying only whether schools are

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[46]Ratteray, Joan (1984). One System is Not Enough: A Free Market Alternative for the Education of Minorities. Lincoln Review, 4 (4), 25-32. Reprinted November 1984, in American Education (U.S. Department of Education) 20 (9).

[47]The institutions generally referred to as "alternative schools" are designed to provide learning environments that are "less restrictive" than public schools. Some have even been described as "dumping grounds," where young people who are either academic failures or who are disruptive are involuntarily sent by public schools. (See: Viadero, Debra (1987). Experts Divided on Alternative Schools. Education Week, 6(30), 1.)

"public" or "private." Sometimes religiously-affiliated schools are classified as "parochial," but it is often impossible to distinguish between parochial schools whose curricula may be effectively controlled by large national or international religious bodies, schools operated by an autonomous congregation that merely bears the name of a larger group, or schools operated by a completely independent local church, where the school administrator has full rein to be creative in designing a quality curriculum that meets the academic and cultural needs of a specific neighborhood. The present study, therefore, is believed to be the first time that the characteristics of independent neighborhood schools have been comprehensively examined.

The schools that are the subject of this study are full-fledged academic institutions that meet and often exceed the standards set for public schools. Administrators also report that while they do accept some children who have been labelled by government schools as "underachieving," independent neighborhood schools are successful in replacing negative social behavior with positive academic achievement.[48] Individual students from these schools have achieved great success, and their graduates can be found in careers at all levels of society, including positions of top national leadership in the United States and in other nations.

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[48]National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise (1985). Independent Schools: Give A Child A Choice (Report on a conference held in 1983). Washington, D.C.: Author.

Many independent neighborhood schools were started in the early 1970s, others began at the turn of the century, and at least one school has been operating for over 103 years.[49] They rely almost exclusively on tuition and, if religiously affiliated, on modest amounts of church support, but they almost never accept government support. They are the product of families who are prepared to make great financial sacrifices in order to exercise educational choice.

Courses at these schools include mathematics and science instruction at early grade levels. In addition to literature and foreign language courses, reading and writing skills are emphasized, and academic performance is measured periodically by nationally-recognized standardized tests. Most of the institutions are state accredited or licensed, where applicable. The majority provide instruction from preschool through eighth grade, but there are some high schools. The most recent update reveals that their average enrollment is between 100 and 149 students, ranging from 22 to over 800.

Some graduates continue their education in private schools, while others go to specialized or selective public high schools. Many school administrators cite examples of students who come to their school several grades behind where they are expected to be but who soon catch up with and surpass their public school counterparts by several years.

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[49]Several older schools have been subsequently discovered.

Teachers in these institutions generally have undergraduate degrees, while many have graduate degrees or credits. A majority of the teachers live within the community being served and are of the same ethnic/cultural background as the children they teach. Some of the teachers at independent neighborhood schools are alumni of these institutions who have earned degrees at traditional universities and returned to their alma mater to teach, other teachers come to independent schools from active service in public schools, while some are retired public school teachers who feel that they now are in an atmosphere where they finally are able to teach and where children can learn.

An important characteristic of independent neighborhood schools is their fiscal and organizational autonomy. More than 80 percent of the schools surveyed indicated that they receive no money from government sources, foundations, or corporations. Therefore, they are not subject to the financial leverage that imposes monitoring and reporting requirements normally associated with these types of funding sources. The result is that there are few reliable sources of data on the location, number or characteristics of these institutions. This is a specific impediment to research, and it also results in schools being unaware of each other and unable to form information networks,

even when they are located near each other in the same city.[50]

The investigators in this study know of only one national membership organization, the Council of Independent Black Institutions, which promotes traditional expectations regarding academic quality and also advocates an Afrocentric culture-based curriculum.[51] This advocacy limits its support to roughly 35 schools that incorporate similar curriculum approaches.

Independent neighborhood schools have a long history, and many of them are proving themselves to be durable institutions. Their personnel and families show they have the tenacity to pursue freedom of choice in spite of financial obstacles in order to gain control over the education of their children.

B. ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Data were obtained from telephone interviews with administrators of 211 schools[52] and from 75 written responses to

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[50]Ratteray, Joan (1986). Access to Quality: Private Schools in Chicago's Inner City. (Report No. 9, June 27). Chicago: The Heartland Institute.

[51]Brookins, Craig (1984). A Descriptive Analysis of Ten Independent Black Educational Models. Unpublished master's thesis, Michigan State University.

[52]We still cannot say exactly how many independent neighborhood schools there are. The massive search required to do this is beyond the scope and financial resources of this project.

a detailed questionnaire. It was determined that independent neighborhood schools are of two types: those that are religiously-affiliated and those that are secular. Although there are enormous variations between them, they share some common characteristics that distinguish them from other types of private schools.

1. Religious and Secular Approaches

Approximately one-half of the independent neighborhood schools in the survey can be described as religious and one-half secular.

Preliminary reports indicated that there were religious and secular types of independent neighborhood schools, and they relied on these two factors to give children a context for the acquisition of knowledge. Schools in the present study were classified as "religious" or "secular" based on their organizational affiliation and the emphasis placed on religion, as seen in Figure 2.

Affiliation. The first criterion for distinguishing religious and secular schools is their organizational affiliation. Schools that are owned by or receive substantial

Figure 2

RELIGIOUS & SECULAR CONTEXTS FOR LEARNING

RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS (n=38)		SECULAR SCHOOLS (n=37)
Churches or other Religious Organizations	.....AFFILIATION.....	Families, Community Organizations, Businesses, etc.
Yes: 33 / No: 5		Yes: 37 / No: 0
Curriculum Emphasis on Religious Beliefs/Doctrines	..RELIGIOUS EMPHASIS..	Curriculum Emphasis on Religious Beliefs/Doctrines
Yes: 19 / No: 19		Yes: 0 / No: 37

support from churches or other religious organizations are defined in this study as religious schools. Schools were classified as secular if their administrators indicated that the primary affiliation of the school, including ownership and substantial support, was with families, community organizations, or their own proprietary businesses.

Of the 75 schools that responded to the survey, 38 said they were religiously-based and the remaining 37 were considered secular. Our analysis showed that 33 of the 38 respondents from religious schools stated that their schools had a direct affiliation with a church or other religious organization. Also, 19 of the 38 respondents indicated that their curriculum emphasized specific religious beliefs or doctrines, and 19 did not. However, on the issue of racial, ethnic and cultural emphases in the curriculum, 14 of the religious schools said they had such an emphasis, while 24 did not or did not respond.

Among the secular schools, we found affiliations with institutions such as families, community organizations, and their own proprietary businesses that in many respects were similiar to the relationship of churches to the religious schools. There were numerous instances in which families owned and operated the schools. We were told by one administrator that she and her husband had planned starting a school for several years prior to actually opening one. During that time, both partners worked. They "saved one income and lived off the other," until they had

enough money to start their school.

There were some cases in which support was obtained from ancillary businesses, including restaurants, boutiques, general contracting firms, and bookstores. Some schools were collectively owned by the members of organizations. In one instance, a community organization founded a school, then incorporated it as a separate entity controlled by its own board of directors.

Emphasis on Religion. The second criterion for classifying schools as religious or secular is the emphasis they place on religion in the curriculum. Included in the religious category were 19 schools that emphasized a specific religious belief or doctrine in the design of their curriculum.

It is likely, however, that the curricula at a larger number of religious schools could be classified as emphasizing specific religious beliefs and doctrines than were actually indicated by the respondents. We learned during our field visits that some of the respondents interpreted this item on our questionnaire to mean giving emphasis to the doctrines of a particular denomination.

In one example, a respondent from a school operated by a church within the denomination of Churches of God in Christ had indicated no such curriculum emphasis at his school in order to reflect the fact that families from other denominations enrolled

their children there. The curriculum at the school, however, was firmly based on Biblical teachings.

In addition to information obtained during interviews, there was evidence in school documents, such as brochures, that indicated a larger number of school curricula emphasized specific religious beliefs and doctrines. Also, by comparing the administrators' responses for the survey item which asked if the school's curriculum emphasized a specific religious doctrine or belief with other items on the instrument such as the open-ended descriptions of their schools, we found instances that suggested the question had been misinterpreted. Our estimate, then, based on data from field interviews, the survey responses and the analysis of school documents is that perhaps as many as 33 of the 38 religious-based school emphasize a specific religious belief or doctrine in their curriculum.

We also found five instances in which the respondents indicated that their schools were not affiliated with a church or religious organization but stated, nonetheless, that the curricula their schools emphasized a specific religious belief or doctrine. In one such school, the respondent indicated that the curriculum emphasized "full gospel Christianity." In another, it was stated that the curriculum emphasized "a belief in God from various religious systems...." Our initial interest was to determine which schools incorporated religious instruction in their curricula. We determined that the category of religious-

based schools would include these schools, even though the respondent had not indicated an affiliation with a church or other religious organization.

2. Five Characteristics of Schools

Independent neighborhood schools have five distinguishing characteristics. They are, follows:

a. Geographic concentration in urban areas;

b. A racially and ethnically homogeneous enrollment, representative of African-Americans, Mexican-Americans or other cultural groups that are not numerically dominant in the United States;

c. Policies indicating a sensitivity to the social conditions that affect their client community;

d. The characteristics of a "neighborhood school;" and

e. Operations that are independent of control by larger organizations.

These five predominant characteristics are discussed in the following sections.

a. Concentration in Urban Areas

Independent neighborhood schools are located primarily in America's urban areas, with the largest number in the Northeast.

The 211 independent neighborhood schools that were identified during the first phase of this study were located in 28 States, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The largest concentrations of independent neighborhood schools can be found in Chicago, New York City, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., Los Angeles, Atlanta, Miami, the San Francisco and Oakland areas, Boston, Newark, and Houston. (See Figure 3.) In fact, the cities that contain the 50 largest central-city school districts in the United States account for nearly 70 percent of the independent neighborhood schools identified in the present study.

Figure 3

NATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOLS SURVEYED

(n=75)

b. Racial and Ethnic Homogeneity

Half of the schools surveyed indicated that their school was designed specifically to address the needs of a particular racial, ethnic or cultural group.

One of the concerns of our investigation was to learn what school administrators did to address what they saw as the cultural needs of their pupils. Administrators were asked to identify the racial and ethnic composition of the enrollment at their schools, and that information is shown in Table 3. Additional related questions were asked of the administrators and the families during the interview process. The effects of this focus on race, ethnicity and culture in the survey yielded information on the extent of homogeneity and its impact on the curriculum.

Extent of Homogeneity

Of the 73 administrators who responded, 56 of them (77 percent) indicated that their enrollment is more than 81 percent African American. Table 3 also shows a small number of schools with homogeneity among other racial and ethnic groups,

Table 3

HOMOGENEITY IN ENROLLMENT AMONG SCHOOLS

(n=75)

ENROLLMENT	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS REPORTING PERCENTAGES OF GROUPS 0	1-20%	21-40%	41-60%	61-80%	81-99%	100%	TOTAL
AFRICAN-AMERICANS:								
Religious	3	1	0	1	2	13	16	36
Secular	4	2	1	0	3	8	19	37
Total	7	3	1	1	5	21	35	73

DISTRIBUTION OF OTHER GROUPS FOR COMPARISON

(n=73)

ENROLLMENT	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS REPORTING PERCENTAGES OF GROUPS 0	1-20%	21-40%	41-60%	61-80%	81-99%	100%	TOTAL
HISPANIC-AMERICANS:								
Religious	23	10	1	0	1	1	0	36
Secular	24	8	0	0	2	1	1	36
Total	47	18	1	0	3	2	1	72
ASIAN-AMERICANS:								
Religious	30	6	0	0	0	0	0	36
Secular	32	3	0	1	0	0	0	36
Total	62	9	0	1	0	0	0	72
NATIVE-AMERICANS:								
Religious	37	0	0	0	0	1	0	38
Secular	36	1	0	0	0	0	1	37
Total	72	1	0	0	0	1	1	75
EURO-AMERICANS:								
Religious	26	10	0	0	0	0	0	36
Secular	23	10	3	0	0	0	0	36
Total	49	20	3	0	0	0	0	72

specifically Hispanic-Americans, Asian-Americans, and Native-Americans.[53]

It can be assumed this indicates that children remain in this type of environment because the families believe the schools they have chosen are more capable of meeting their children's needs than schools with more diverse enrollments.

Curriculum Influences

When administrators were asked if their schools were designed specifically to address the needs of any particular racial, ethnic or cultural group, many of them said no. That immediately raises two questions:

First, do those administrators who replied "No" recognize that children have special needs that stem from their racial, ethnic or cultural background? Second, assuming children do have special needs, why would the administrator reply that the school has no program to meet those needs?[54] We do not have definitive answers to these questions, although it is possible to arrive at

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[53]The median school enrollment is 99 percent African-American American. (As a measure of central tendency, the median is less affected by extremely high or low enrollment figures and therefore presents a more accurate picture of homogeneity in the enrollment within individual schools.)

[54]Bear in mind that the respondents usually were the top administrator or some other person with authority to speak for the school, and the responses reflect the manner in which this person chose to answer our request for information. (See "Limitations on Findings" section.)

some tentative conclusions based on the interviews of families and administrators.

Then there were administrators who answered "Yes" their schools do attempt to meet the needs of a particular group. In fact, 34 of them (47 percent of the sample) said they did. In this instance at least, the benefits of attending one of these schools can be more directly traced to the purposeful actions of the administrators. Among the secular schools, 20 out of 37 compared to only 14 out of 38 religious-based schools indicated such a curriculum emphasis. (See Figure 4.) A possible explanation for the contrasting responses of administrators at religious and secular schools may be the role of religious doctrines and beliefs in the curriculum.

As stated earlier, a major criterion for considering a school as secular was that no such curriculum emphasis be indicated. The presence of this emphasis among the religious-based schools, however, may mean that the attention given to directing children toward religous goals may supercede the provision of racial, ethnic or cultural emphases in the curriculum.

The school survey questionnaire included both open-ended and structured-response items. The open-ended item which asked the administrators to indicate how their school's curriculum addressed the needs of the group for whom the school was designed. The responses tended to emphasize both academic and

Figure 4

CULTURAL EMPHASIS IN THE CURRICULUM

RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS (n=38)		SECULAR SCHOOLS (n=37)
Curriculum Emphasis on Racial, Ethnic & Cultural Issues	...CULTURAL EMPHASIS...	Curriculum Emphasis on Racial, Ethnic, & Cultural Issues
Yes | No*		Yes | No*
14 | 24		20 | 17

* These "No" categories also includes those who did not respond to the question.

cultural qualities of the schools -- questions of content and context. Most often the respondents would indicate that their schools offered "traditional" academic programs which incorporated learning materials and offered examples that reflected African-American history and culture.

When we made field visits we found during our interviews that there was a marked sensitivity among all of the school administrators regarding the amount and type of emphasis given to issues related to African-American history and culture. Many were cautious and overemphasized that they did not want to give the appearance of being "too Black." They expressed a recognition that culture, heritage, and point of view were important to their schools but they did not want it to appear that they were not equally, if not more greatly, concerned with offering quality academic programs.

One independent neighborhood school adminstrator who had spent 18 years as a public school teacher incorporated a course in Black History in her school's curriculum. She was one of the administrators in our survey who had indicated that her school was not designed to address the needs of a particular racial, ethnic or cultural group, even though that school's enrollment was 100 percent African-American. She qualified the incorporation of the Black History course by stating:

> I don't stress blackness but I do stress to children that there is a history for black people and you need to know that to appreciate...the race and what the race is all about... But I'm

> not so black that I don't know that I live in a world with other people and I don't want to do that to the children. I want to put material out there for them, you know, and I don't want to impress upon them the kind of attitude that I might have about certain things because I was born in a different age and something that I'm presenting to them might strike me differently than it would strike them. (19.105)

Another administrator of a pre-kindergarten through 8th grade school told us that 95 percent of his graduates go on to either prep schools or Catholic high schools. He also reported that every graduate of his school who had taken an admissions test to enter high school had passed and that this was the way he measured the academic success of his program. With regard to the needs of his students in areas related to their cultural heritage he had this to say:

> I have grown away from laying a heavy trip on black kids in...some formal way about their history. I think we need to teach black history in the way that kids learn anything. They don't learn through lecturing at them, preaching at them, they learn through seeing you are interested in them and in who they are. (77.111)

The structured-response item asked the school administrators if, in addressing the specific needs of the groups, their schools were designed to serve, they included certain specific approaches to curriculum design. The most frequently utilized approaches are reliance upon materials that are designed by the teacher (32 out of 34 schools). They also

included units of study on cultural issues of the group involved that are required within specific curriculum content areas (meaning English, mathematics, history, and so on), and this applied to 27 out of 34 schools. Less frequently utilized approaches included the use of specialized course offerings that would be dedicated to the study of that group's culture (21 out of 34 schools), as well as the use of required units of study across all content areas (15 out of 34 schools).

With regard to teacher-made or teacher-modified instructional materials, the most frequently given reason for their use was the unavailability of commercially-produced materials that adequately respresented African-Americans or Hispanic-Americans. One administrator of a church-related school indicated a preference for standardized materials produced by an established publisher of textbooks and materials for Christian schools. He did not, however, use the history materials offered by this company because, as he told us:

> "It's very European, and that is the one thing that I have been dissatisfied with. The fact that their social studies program is so limited. (52.124)"

It is important to note that of the adjustments the schools could make to serve the needs of their students, nearly all emphasized the importance of good teaching by stressing the use of teacher-initiated and teacher-designed activities as the backbone of their curriculum. We found the administrators of

independent neighborhood school to be hard-nosed educators who placed a lot of stock in proven methods. One administrator of a school that served over 100 students in a building previously used as a bank's branch office told us this story:

> When I was in college, they came out with no one wanted to use Dick and Jane anymore because it didn't relate...Now you may get me for this, but Dick and Jane taught everybody to read....You know, it didn't make sense to us, but the point is, we could call those words and we could put the period and question mark....But when we started depending on the color of the pictures and the names, and less on the skills...I look at these children and these kids can't write, they don't know anything, they haven't seen anything... the point is, I had all my skills. You know, nobody was relating to me, but I was learning. (40.147)

Another effort schools make to address the needs of African-American pupils is to determine what observances shall be recognized in the school calendar. Our survey and interviews inquired about the kinds of observances that took place in the schools, including U.S. national holidays, religious holidays or events, historically significant personalities, and culturally significant events or festivals observed at their schools.

We found that more than 85 percent of the schools observed U.S. national holidays which occurred during the school year. We also found that the school calendars included a number of observances not generally recognized in the United States, some of which are of historical and cultural significance. Some of them also are of religious importance, particularly the

Islamic holidays Id-ul Fitr and Id-ul Adha.[55]

Schools with predominantly African-American enrollments have also instituted special observances, ranging from assemblies to closings, for historically significant personalities such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; Malcolm X; Marcus Garvey; Fannie Lou Hamer; Kwame Nkrumah; and Julius Nyerere. Among those, the most often mentioned are Dr. King and Malcolm X. Benito Juarez was mentioned by a Mexican-American school.

Kwanzaa was most often mentioned as a culturally significant event recognized by school calendars. It is a seven-day observance created in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga, an African-American activist-scholar, who founded the U.S. Organization and developed the principles associated with Kawaida, of which Kwanzaa is a part. The basis of Kwanzaa is a value system called the Nguzo Saba (seven principles) synthesized by Dr. Karenga from his studies of traditional African civilizations.[56] Although not religious in its intent, the fact that Kwanzaa begins on December 26 has led some to associate it with Christmas and its subsequent representation by some schools as both a cultural and a religious observance. Kwanzaa is rapidly growing as "people's observance" among African-Americans.

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[55]Id-ul Fitr is a one-day celebration at the end of the fast of Ramadan, and Id-ul Adha is a three-day observance of the willingness of the prophet Ibrahim to demonstrate his faith by sacrificing his son, Isaac.

[56]Karenga, Maulana. (1977). Kwanzaa: Its Origin, Concepts, and Practice. Los Angeles: Kawaida Publications.

Juneteenth, an observance mentioned by some schools in Texas and California, is very much African-American in its origin. It is observed around June 19th and its name is derived from the expression given to date that Africans enslaved in Texas found out that the Emancipation Proclamation had been signed. Although the document was signed on January 1, 1863, many who were enslaved in the lower South did not learn that it was signed until the arrival of Union troops.[57]

Other observances cited by school administrators included African Liberation Day, Soweto Day, and Bunker Hill Day. Some schools designated observances such as Black Family Day, and African Ancestors' Day. A Native American school included Mille Lacs Band Day and Winnebago Day. A school in the Virgin Islands which reported its enrollment to be 95 percent black listed Hurricane Thanksgiving and an observance for a local hero named Hamilton Jackson.

By blending traditional national holidays with holidays and other observances of their own determination, the schools are able to reorient their viewpoint (the context for education) so that African-Americans, Mexican-Americans, and Native Americans are able to view the world by standing within their own cultural contexts. Many independent neighborhood schools see this type of reorientation of perspective as being a part of their mission to

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[57]Franklin, V. P. (1984). Black Self-Determination: A Cultural History of the Faith of the Fathers pp. 105-108. Westport, CT: Lawrence Hill.

serve their communities.

Even in instances where administrators did not indicate that their schools were designed to address the needs of a specific racial, ethnic or cultural group we found evidence of the acceptance of such a role by the school. In one religious school for which the administrator had indicated it was not designed to address the needs of a specific group, we were told in an interview about her minister's vision which led to the founding of the school:

> When he came to the group and said that the Lord had directed him to open this school for black students, the goal being that our children would learn who God is, who they are, and that they would ultimately give back to this community and to black communities, and that we had a major job to do. (58.97)

In her statement, the social mandate, though secondary to the Divine one, is quite evident. From its inception, the mission of the school has been to teach African-American students. Yet, this administrator indicated on the survey questionnaire that there was no such emphasis in her curriculum.

We believe that there are more schools in the sample whose operations address the needs of African-American students than the 34 who reported on the survey questionnaire that they did. Their reluctance may be because they wanted to be cautious about making a statement that might be interpreted as discriminatory against other racial, ethnic and cultural groups.

The investigators were told just such a thing during at least one off-the-record conversation with a school administrator. Another explanation could be that the item simply was not clearly stated on the questionnaire.

c. Responsiveness to Social Conditions

> The schools surveyed are part of a long tradition. They are distinguished from other types of schools because they were founded by people whose commitment to social change led them to establish unique institutions that respond to social challenges. They are schools that bring academic excellence into their communities and teach children respect, utilizing scarce resources, yet are affordable to the communities they serve.

Long Tradition. The sample included schools that were founded as early as 1884 and several that were established during the first decade of this century. Table 4 shows that the post-World War II era produced 89.3 percent of the 75 schools, and this is true for both the religious schools (89.4 percent) and the secular schools (89.1 percent). Moreover, nearly nine out of

Table 4

SCHOOLS BY YEAR FOUNDED

VALUE	FREQUENCY		
1884	1		
1904	1		
1909	2		
1912	1		
1916	1		
1922	1		
1934	1		
Subtotal		8	(11%)
1946	3		
1947	2		
1953	1		
1959	1		
1964	2		
1965	1		
1966	3		
1968	2		
1969	4		
1970	3		
1971	3		
1972	1		
1974	3		
1975	7	=33	(44%)
1976	5		
1977	2		
1978	5		
1979	4		
1980	3		
1981	4		
1982	3		
1983	3		
1984	2		
Subtotal		67	(89%)
TOTAL		75	(100%)

ten of the independent neighborhood schools established after World War II opened their doors for the first time between 1964 and 1984, which links their founding to protests by African-Americans against social inequality. This pattern over the years reflects the emerging belief that institution building among cultural/ethnic groups is an effective way to produce social change.

Commitment to Social Change. Our interviews with independent neighborhood school administrators provided some examples of how perceptions of social conditions and social expectations, combined with a deep sense of mission, have led to the founding of independent neighborhood schools.

In one instance, we interviewed a director who founded a tutoring center that eventually became a full-time school for children from kindergarten through eighth grade. Before founding her own school she had several years of experience as a child study team member in the public schools. She observed that many children in an area of the city which she described as "the white affluent section" were able to avoid classification as special education pupils through participation in private tutoring. When she suggested tutoring to African-American families she found a willingness to obtain such service but there were too few tutors available to accommodate the demand. In the following passage she describes how she responded to this particular need.

> So I said, "I'll tell you what, I'll do it." ...[F]rom 3 to 6 on Sunday...I would keep the students like an hour...[T]hen I would have them three at a time...three in this time, three for that time...And then when I was testing the children, I saw that some of these children hadn't been taught...[P]eople [were] referring them for mentally retarded. They were not mentally retarded; they were educationally retarded. (76.126)

In another example, a school was founded by a husband and wife team who began planning their school while still in college. They worked and saved for 10 years after graduating from college to open their pre-kindergarten through 8th grade school. The following excerpts tell the story of how these individuals perceived themselves as contributors to the educational needs of African-Americans.

> INTERVIEWER: How did you secure the facilities for the school in the first place?
>
> RESPONDENT: From the time I started, from the time that I got married...after college, my husband and I knew that's what we wanted to do.
>
> INTERVIEWER: You mean the school?
>
> RESPONDENT: Yes, the school...I thought about, my husband thought about, what contribution can we make to the world to black people...now that we have somewhat struggled to go to college...I'm the first generation and so is [my husband] to have gone in our family...I was in education. He was in engineering. So, he engineered the education. (23.170)

Both religious and secular schools appeal to a sense of mission that evokes hard work and personal sacrifice from the

people who are involved. In the case of some churches, support for the school is incorporated into the missionary work of the church members. In our interviews with families, we heard testimonies of spiritual faith that revealed a strong belief in the righteousness of not only enrolling one's children in the school but in doing whatever one could do to support the school in other ways as well.

We spoke with one parent who had a degree in mathematics and offered her services at her son's school as a regular volunteer. One reason she gave for doing this was the enjoyment she got from the school's morning service which was held in the church sanctuary. She had the following to say regarding her efforts:

> [T]here was an opening. I did not want it, because I have a full-time job. But I said okay, I would help out until they get someone, you know, to replace the teacher. And I ended up staying because I love it. (58.40)

Another parent, who herself was a committed worker in the church, decribed what she saw as the commitment of teachers to do more than the minimum necessary for the students:

> I work in the church and I'm here a lot. I'm also a member of the church, so I'm here in the evenings and you see these teachers still over here working late, and I know the teachers get paid. I know they aren't paid overtime and their here late, and...if children are here they never leave children...I've seen them on Saturdays over here working in their room...I just know personally the kind of things they do for the school, the commitment they have. (58.4)

This same sense of mission was observed at secular schools as well. There is a strong belief in the purpose of the school, and it is so strong that it motivates families and teachers to go beyond their ordinary limits. In the secular schools, this motivation may not be attributable to an organized religion, but it is there nonetheless. It is often inspired by cultural and political beliefs that are independent of organized religion. Some would contend that the depth of their mission is akin to the "spiritual" motivation of families associated with religious schools.

The use made of Karenga's Nguzo Saba (Kiswahili for "seven principles") is an example of this.[58] We observed posters in some schools listing the Nguzo Saba. In one school we visited, the recitation of these principles is done daily as part of a morning ritual, just as the Ten Commandments were seen used in religous-based schools. In other words, children in some secular schools use the Nguzo Saba to assess their behavior in much the same way that children in some religious schools use the Ten Commandments.

Many of the respondents to our questionnaire described their schools as unique institutions that address the problems of

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[58] The seven principles are: Umoja (unity); Kujichagulia (self-determination); Ujima (collective work and responsibility); Ujamaa (cooperative economics); Nia (purpose); Kuumba (creativity); and Imani (faith). For expanded definitions see: Karenga, Maulana Kwanzaa: Origin, Concepts, Practice. Los Angeles: Kawaida Publications, 1977.

their supporting community. The respondents wrote statements such as:

> "We are the only Black privately operated school in Missouri." (4.0)
>
> "Last of its kind" (5.0)
>
> "World's largest all Black Christian school." (44.0)
>
> "...an example of a lifestyle struggling to survive...." (70.0)

Respondents also indicated that they were aware of the enormous social challenges that confront and form the context in which children must learn. The schools are quite often seen as solutions to the educational problems of their supporting communities. Some examples of these concepts follow:

> "If inner city schools were organized and patterned on some [of our] principles, crime, drop-outs and frustrated individuals would be prevented" (62.0)
>
> "...willing to accept students we realize are 'at risk'...knowing that if their only other choice is the public school system, any hope for positive educational experience is remote." (59.0)

Academic Excellence and Respect. Academic excellence is the most important goal that administrators of independent neighborhood schools have for their students, and this is the benefit they are offering their communities. We were provided with many comments that revealed the standards that these school

administrators had established for their institutions in the area of educational quality. The standards are the result of what administrators see as the educational needs of their communities. Two dominant themes emerged, one linked to demonstrated academic performance by their students and the second to social performance. Some examples of administrators' statements regarding academic performance expectations are the following.

> "Reading and math two years above national norms." (40.0)
>
> "Mastery of required subject matter with C or above." (16.0)
>
> "Should reach 70% on academic achievement tests." (32.0)
>
> "Strong command of reading, writing and speaking." (12.0)
>
> "A high rate of college acceptance." (63.0)

Some of the statements indicating the expectations administrators had for social performance describe the personal qualities that students should possess, such as:

> "Self-discipline and respect for authority." (62.0)
>
> "Students will be aware of unique individual talent and proud of who they are." (62.0)
>
> "How to survive in this world." (44.0)
>
> "Desire to return skills to benefit community." (24.0)

Most of the schools administer some form of standardized test and most claimed that their pupils were either at grade level or were one to two years above grade level, but documentation of such claims was often not available to us as investigators in this study.

In one pre-kindergarten through fifth grade school in which a standardized test was administered to 36 pupils in grades K-5, documentation was provided to show that the average score for the schools was above the 80th percentile. The range of scores for the complete battery of tests extended from the 52nd percentile to the 99th percentile. The demand for independent neighborhood schools to prove their abilities to deliver high test scores as evidence of outstanding academic achievement will be present for as long as standardized test scores among public school pupils in the urban districts which surround them remain unsatisfactory.

Limited Resources. An important aspect of independent neighborhood schools is their ability to produce students who are academically successful yet do so with limited resouces. They are funded almost entirely by tuition, administrators say the salaries of their teachers are so low as not to be competitive, and their facilities often lack many things considered essential for modern education by public school standards. Table 5 shows that the various facilities and services available in independent

Table 5

FACILITIES AND SERVICES AT SCHOOLS

(n=73)

FACILITIES & SERVICES*	PERCENT OF SCHOOLS IN WHICH AVAILABLE Religious	Secular	Total
Audiovisual Equipment	89.2	94.4	91.8
Gymnasium	51.4	38.9	45.6
Playground	73.0	75.0	74.0
Library	75.7	80.6	78.1
Computers	73.0	72.2	72.6
Free Meals	43.2	33.3	38.4
Student-purchased meals	35.1	41.7	38.4
Science Labs**	35.1	41.7	38.4

* The survey form did not provide respondents with criteria for reporting the quantity or quality of their facilities/services. It should not be assumed, for example, that the term "library" necessarily refers to a separate room, with professional personnel dedicated to that activity and an organized supply of current books.

** Science laboratories are normally considered essential for secondary school pupils. Of the 23 secondary schools in our sample, 60 percent of secular schools and 61.5 of religious schools report that they have laboratories.

neighborhood schools are those that are normally available in public schools.

During our field visits, we found that independent neighborhood schools were housed in a variety of structures. Some schools operate in buildings that were originally constructed as schools, although not for them, but most of the schools operate in facilities constructed for other purposes and subsequently converted into schools. For example, one school was leasing space in a building that was formerly a family restaurant, one was in a building that had once housed the branch office of a bank, another was in a building that used to be a neighborhood market and adjoining liquour store. We found a few instances where church education buildings had been provided for school use.

In nearly all instances, facilities were becoming too limited for the schools, and waiting lists for admission were quite common. Half of the schools reported they had waiting lists, although the largest number of students were waiting to get into the religious schools, as seen in Table 6.

Moderate Tuition. Another way in which independent neighborhood schools respond to the needs of their supporting communities is by maintaining moderate tuition levels.

The average annual tuition for the schools in our survey sample was $1,783 per pupil. Among the secular schools in the

Table 6

WAITING LISTS AT SCHOOLS

	RELIGIOUS	SECULAR	TOTAL SAMPLE
SCHOOLS REPORTING THEY HAVE LISTS:			
Yes	23	15	38 (51%)
No	14	22	36 (49%)
Total	37	37	74 (100%)

	RELIGIOUS	SECULAR	TOTAL SAMPLE
NUMBER OF APPLICANTS ON WAITING LISTS	1,144	346	1,490
	(76%)	(24%)	(100%)

survey, the average annual tuition was a little over $2000, while for the religious schools it was just under $1500, as seen in Table 7. In comparison, tuition costs for exclusive private schools are reported to average $5,338,[59] and the average tuition at church-related schools, which includes parochial schools, is $825,[60] which is much less than tuition at independent neighborhood schools. While independent neighborhood schools rely on tuition as their primary source of income, they seek to be inclusive rather than exclusive. Tuition levels tend to be set at the lowest levels at which it is possible for the schools to operate, yet at the same time make their services affordable to as many families in their supporting community as possible.

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[59]National Association of Independent Schools. (1987). Facts and Figures on Independent Schools, cited in Education Week, April 29, p. 10.

[60]Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. (1982, October). Current Population Survey. Unpublished data. [According to the Census Bureau, this survey has not been done since 1982.]

Table 7

AVERAGE ANNUAL TUITION

	TYPE OF SCHOOL		
	Religious (n=34)	Secular (n=32)	Total* (n=66)
One Pupil	$1,490	$2,071	$1,783
Each Additional	$1,295	$1,599	$1,455

* Five of the schools in the total sample were from boarding schools. They are omitted from this table, because they were so few and certain factors such as tuition and distance of families from school produced numbers that were so large, they tended to skew the data for the remainder of the schools.

d. **Neighborhood School Characteristics**:

> **The schools usually are small in size, have caring teachers in small classrooms, draw heavily on families in their immediate neighborhoods, and often maintain the atmosphere of an extended family.**

Independent neighborhood schools usually have small enrollments, averaging 110 per school at the secondary level, 48 in middle school, 49 in elementary school, 72 in primary, and 49 in pre-primary levels (See Table 8). Religious schools, however tend to have larger enrollments than secular schools.

The small size of these schools is essential to fostering the closeness on which they thrive. Another indicator of their size is the average pupil to teacher ratio, which is 14.6 to 1 (Table 9).

As we have shown, independent neighborhood schools are concentrated in urban areas. These schools operate in the midst of some of America's largest public school districts, which have changed greatly in the past 25 years. In many instances, public schools have now reached a point where they can no longer be defined as truly "neighborhood" institutions.

Table 8

AVERAGE ENROLLMENT BY GRADE LEVEL
(Reported by Administrators)

	Number Respon -ding[1]	Schools Repre -sented[2]	Percent Respon -ding[3]	Avg No. of Pupils
RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS:				
Pre-Primary (n=71)	36	21	58	58
Primary (n=71)	36	30	83	79
Elementary (n=70)	36	28	78	51
Middle (n=70)	36	25	69	59
Secondary (n=72)	36	13	36	137
SECULAR SCHOOLS:				
Pre-Primary (n=71)	35	23	66	41
Primary (n=71)	35	26	74	65
Elementary (n=70)	34	23	68	45
Middle (n=70)	34	19	56	35
Secondary (n=72)	36	10	28	74
TOTAL SAMPLE:				
Pre-Primary (n=71)	71	44	62	49
Primary (n=71)	71	56	79	72
Elementary (n=70)	70	51	73	49
Middle (n=70)	70	44	63	48
Secondary (n=72)	72	23	32	110

NOTES: [1] **Total Responses.** These are the total number of schools responding to this item.

[2] **Valid Responses.** Some of the respondents had students at this grade level. Those who did are counted as valid responses for the purpose of determining the average.

[3] **Percent Responding.** Schools represented (valid responses) are shown as a percent of all schools responding to this item.

Table 9

STAFFING CHARACTERISTICS OF SCHOOLS

	TYPES OF SCHOOLS		
	Religious	Secular	Total Sample
Gross Student /Teacher Count	584	510	1094
Number of Schools	37	37	74
Ratio	15.9	13.8	14.6

NOTE: The responses to the Question 18 in the school survey form (Appendix II) were given as the number of students per teacher. The "Gross Student/Teacher Count" above is computed as the sum of the products obtained by multiplying the net student/teacher counts (i.e. student/teacher ratios) reported by the respondents and the frequency of those responses. The formula used is, as follows:

Sum (Ratio reported x frequency)

Desegregation plans, for example, have resulted in massive busing of pupils as urban school districts attempt to meet racial quotas. This task is exacerbated in many cities because the African-American school enrollment greatly exceeds the actual proportion of African-American families residing in the district. With the implementation of large-scale busing, students are often unable to attend public schools that are close to their homes.

It is not uncommon in urban public schools for many pupils to find themselves unable to participate in extracurricular activities because they must board buses to return to their neighborhoods immediately after school. Schools have found it difficult to get families to attend PTA meetings because many of the families live too far away and lack transportation. In addition, many of the children who live in the immediate neighborhood of public schools actually attend school elsewhere. There are also intangible factors, such as school spirit and other forms of identification commonly perceived as part of the school experience, that are also negatively affected by the structural design of urban school districts.

While we want to stress that the concept of the neighborhood school is not limited to physical proximity, we did find that on the average administrators indicated that more than 45 percent of their students lived in the immediate neighborhood.

The views of the administrators are validated by data from families, indicating that 50.2 families live less than three miles from the school their children attend.

We also found that a number of schools provided community services such as classes in martial arts, nutrition, aerobic excersise, classical African civilizations, and traditional African dance that were intended to encourage residents of the immediate neighborhood to utilize their facilities.

Our results indicate that administrators see their schools as embodying or striving for many of the qualities that are characteristic of traditional neighborhood schools. Such features as small enrollments, close interpersonal relationships, and parental involvement are considered essential. In some schools, particularly those with Afrocentric programs, we found that students were expected to refer to adult staff members as "mamas" and "babas" which are Kiswahili terms that mean mother and father. The concept that is being fostered by the use of such terms is the idea of extended familyhood linking the home and school.

The extended family and close neighborhood are qualities that are often associated with rural living. Given the relatively recent urbanization of many African-Americans it is quite probable that these concepts are still very much part of their cultural patterns. To illustrate this, consider the following phrases independent neighborhood school administrators

wrote to characterize their schools:

> "Similar to a one room school house in a Southern setting." (40.0)
>
> "old fashioned type of school." (63.0)
>
> "small family-like atmosphere." (49.0, 59.0)
>
> "family oriented" (1.0, 5.0, 37.0, 17.0)

By way of juxtaposition, the desire to maintain a neighborhood atmosphere can conflict with the desire to appeal to a broad range of income groups. One principal reported two incidents of African-American students from upper-income families who had not had much exposure to their inner-city peers:

> The boy came here and was really unhappy the first semester...I'd say he's probably a sure-fire merit semifinalist...This is the first time this boy has ever been in an all-Black environment in his life. He grew up thinking that the White world would treat him the way he -- He's a kind of light-skinned Black kid, very bright, from a middle-class home. He had no sense of being Black. The "Black experience"? He didn't know what it was all about.
>
> When he goes out and faces the world, if he hasn't been indoctrinated to the Black experience, he doesn't know anything about the history of the Black struggle, he hasn't been brought face to face with some kind of reality, that's fairly dangerous. With his native talent, he might be able to oversome it, but what about all these middle-of-the-roaders, you know? (80.21)

This administrator continued with another example of a mother who came to talk to him about her son:

> She said, "He came home and said he wants to quit."...He had gone to another...school, where Blacks were in the minority...Most of his friends were White. So he has to come to this neighborhood...and a good cross-section of the kids in his class come from this neighborhood or from the federal housing projects. They couldn't dress like he dressed. They came from really poor public [elementary] schools in the Black ghettos, and when he went home, he was scared. He was intimidated...He said to his mom, "Some of those Black boys are dumb."
>
> [His mother] had the insight that what he was being exposed to was what he really needed. She, being a woman out there, working, realized that this is closer to the real world and he finds out what Black people put up with and what they struggle against, and he's going to rub elbows with that for at least four years. There are some parents who see that. There are a fair number who don't. (80.23)

These features of independent neighborhood schools appear to indicate that these small, growing institutions, whose character is still evolving, are providing unique services to the families who enroll their children there and to their communities as well.

e. Operational Autonomy

Independent neighborhood schools are not only financially independent of government and larger private-sector organizations, but they are generally organizationally independent as well, relying heavily on tuition for their support.

Most of the schools appear to be the products of local initiatives within particular communities. In some instances the schools may have been part of a larger order, as in the case of some former parochial school, but have since undergone transformation as the character of the surrounding neighborhood changed.

Table 10 indicates that for religious schools, the average portion of the budget funded by tuition receipts is 62.7 percent. They also receive a larger portion of their operating budgets from other sources, primarily the church (17.3 percent). Among the secular schools (Table 11), tuition receipts must support approximately 79.1 percent of the operating budget. For all schools in our sample (Table 12), tuition receipts account for 70.9 percent of the operating budget. Sources of income such as corporations, community organizations, foundations, and government, provided the lowest levels of support for independent neighborhood schools.

Table 10

SOURCES OF INCOME FOR SCHOOLS
(Religious Schools)

(n=38)

SOURCES OF INCOME	GROSS LEVEL OF FUNDING	PERCENT
Tuition	2,279	62.7
Church	628	17.3
Other	199	5.5
Parent Fundraising	184	5.1
Foundations	140	3.8
Government	125	3.4
Community Organizations	64	1.8
Corporations	17	0.5
	3,636	

NOTE 1: The category "Other" includes tax-deductible contributions from individuals, funds from business investments, interest, endowments, rents, and fees for books and supplies.

NOTE 2: The responses to Question 6 of the school survey form (Appendix II) are given as percentages of total school income. The "Gross Level of Funding" is the sum of the products obtained by multiplying the net funding percentages reported by the respondents and the frequency of the responses, using the following formula:

$$\text{Sum (Percent Reported} \times \text{Frequency)}$$

NOTE 3: Statements of significance are difficult to make when comparing the level of funding between types of schools. We have no prior knowledge of variations in the data within each type of school. At this point, we cannot assume equality of variance.

Table 11

SOURCES OF INCOME FOR SCHOOLS
(Secular Schools)

(n=37)

SOURCES OF INCOME	GROSS LEVEL OF FUNDING	PERCENT
Tuition	3,600	79.1
Other	263	7.3
Parent Fundraising	160	4.4
Government	149	4.1
Foundations	72	2.0
Corporations	53	1.5
Community Organizations	34	0.9
Churches	20	0.6
	4,351	

NOTE 1: The category "Other" includes tax-deductible contributions from individuals, funds from business investments, interest, endowments, rents, and fees for books and supplies.

NOTE 2: The responses to Question 6 of the school survey form (Appendix II) are given as percentages of total school income. The "Gross Level of Funding" is the sum of the products obtained by multiplying the net funding percentages reported by the respondents and the frequency of the responses, using the following formula:

$$\text{Sum (Percent Reported} \times \text{Frequency)}$$

NOTE 3: Statements of significance are difficult to make when comparing the level of funding between types of schools. We have no prior knowledge of variations in the data within each type of school. At this point, we cannot assume equality of variance.

Table 12

SOURCES OF INCOME FOR SCHOOLS
(Total Sample)

(n=75)

SOURCES OF INCOME	GROSS LEVEL OF FUNDING	PERCENT
Tuition	5,128	70.9
Churches	648	8.9
Other	462	6.4
Parent Fundraising	344	4.8
Government	274	3.8
Foundations	212	2.9
Community Organizations	98	1.3
Corporations	70	1.0
	7,236	

NOTE 1: The relatively high figure for church income reflects the support religious schools receive from their churches.

NOTE 2: The responses Question 6 of the school survey form (Appendix II) are given as percentages of total school income. The "Gross Level of Funding" is the sum of the products obtained by multiplying the net funding percentages reported by the respondents and the frequency of the responses, using the following formula:

Sum (Percent Reported x Frequency)

NOTE 3: Statements of significance are difficult to make when comparing the level of funding between types of schools. We have no prior knowledge of variations in the data within each type of school. At this point, we cannot assume equality of variance.

DATA FROM SURVEY OF FAMILIES AND HOUSEHOLDS

This project identifies the characteristics of families and households whose children attend independent neighborhood schools. Our findings are presented here in two parts: a summary description of the families and households, and a detailed analysis of the characteristics of families and households, drawn from the responses to the "parent survey form" and interviews of heads of households.

A. SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF FAMILIES AND HOUSEHOLDS

African-Americans constitute the majority of families enrolled in the independent neighborhood schools in our sample, representing approximately 12,000 young people.

Families tend to have between four and five members, with the majority of them earning less than $30,000 annnually. The schools serve families from a broad cross-section of economic groups, although the larger families, with six to seven members, tend to be enrolled more in secular schools than in religious schools.

The moderate tuition charged appears to be an important factor for some families, although in the sample as a whole, the cost of tuition seems to be less important than the need to

pursue academic studies and to obtain an individualized learning experience for the children enrolled.

Most of the children live less than three miles away from their school, although the higher income families are prepared to drive up to 21 miles daily so that their children can attend these schools.

When parents' occupations are classified according to the level of academic preparation required for those occupations, a larger number of parents with little academic background are in religious schools than in secular schools, whereas parents with advanced academic preparation tend to send their children to secular schools. However, while the religious school parents tend to have less formal academic training, their income levels are comparable to those of parents in secular schools. It should be noted, however, that while the religious and secular school parents have completed senior high school in comparable numbers, more of the mothers in religious schools have earned a four-year degree than fathers in either religious or secular schools.

The process of choosing an independent school usually occurs in three stages. Families make the determination that they must either take their children out of public school or not put them there in the first place. Then they look around for what they consider "a good school." When they find an independent neighborhood school that meets those characteristics, they select that school. After they have some experience with

the way their children achieve in the new environment, these families usually decide to keep their children there.

The most frequently cited reasons for choosing a school involve the nature of the learning environment in an independent school, compared to a public school. The second reason is usually the quality of the academic program. Less frequent, although still important, are reasons relating to affirming the child's cultural background, or the religious teachings and affiliation of religious schools, and the low cost of tuition.

B. ANALYSIS OF FAMILY/HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Data were collected from families and households by written survey and oral interviews. The sample of written surveys consists of 399 responses, drawn from 38 independent neighborhood schools. The interviews were conducted with 35 families and households whose children attended 10 of the schools in the sample (See Table 2).

The 38 schools whose families participated in the written survey were self-selected from among 75 schools whose administrators returned our school questionnaires. An item on the questionnaire had asked each administrator to indicate his or her willingness to participate in subsequent phases of the study.

Those who responded yes and those who asked for additional information were sent instructions for randomly sampling the families at their schools and returning the data to the Institute for Independent Education. Administrators at the 10 participating schools selected as interview sites made the selection of families, following criteria outlined by the investigators. (See the Project Design section of this report.)

Most of the data from the families were derived from structured-response questions. There were four open-ended questions, however, that elicited information in the respondents' own words. A review of these data enabled us to describe the families and households according to their racial and ethnic composition; family size, income, and enrollment in secular or religious schools; income and tuition; distance between home and school; parents' levels of education and occupations; enrollment by grade levels; expectations for their children; reasons for choosing their present school; and how they learned about the school. Each of these factors is discussed below.

1. Racial & Ethnic Composition

African-Americans constitute 87 percent of the families enrolled in the independent neighborhood schools in our sample.

Table 13 shows the racial and ethnic composition of the sample of families that participated in our survey. Since the makeup of the 75 schools from which the 38 schools participating in this phase of the study were drawn was so overwhelmingly African-American, it follows that this homogeneity would be reflected in our sample of families.

2. Family Size, Income and Enrollment

Families who send their children to independent neighborhood schools tend to have four or five members and earn less than $30,000.

The greatest number of families and households[61] in the sample have four to five members (50.9%), followed by those with two to three members (36.3%), as shown in Table 14 and graphically illustrated in Figure 5.

When family size is compared to family income, children from large families (6 to 7 members), earning less than $15,000, are nine times more likely to be found in a secular school than a religious school (Compare Tables 15 and 16).

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[61]Both "families" and "households" were used in the survey and are to be considered as synonymous for purposes of these data.

Table 13

RACIAL AND ETHNIC GROUPS AMONG FAMILIES

(n=399)

	DISTRIBUTION OF GROUPS Family Data
African-Americans	86.7%
Hispanic-Americans	6.7%
Euro-Americans	2.8%
Asian-Americans	2.3%
Native-Americans	1.5%

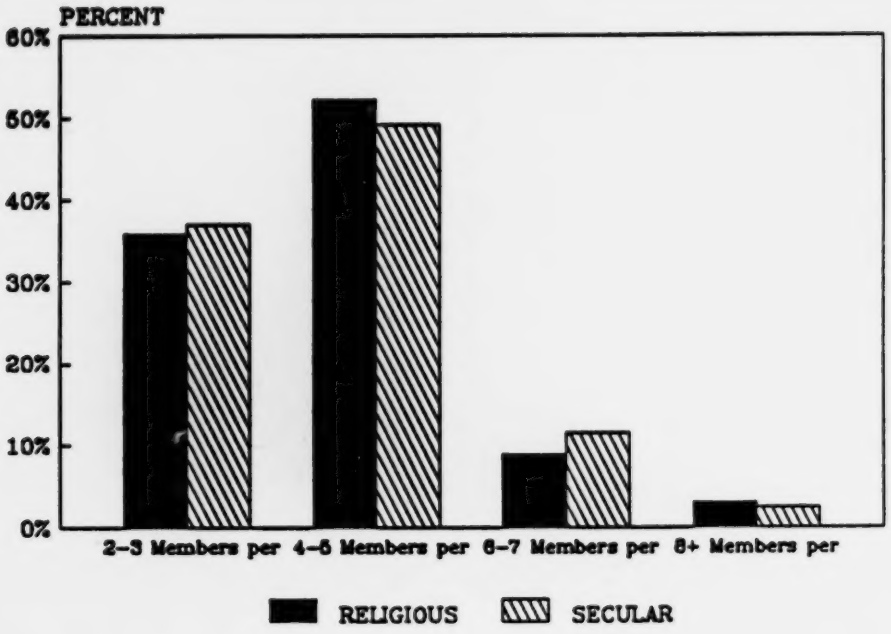
Independent neighborhood schools also serve a broad cross-section of income groups, fairly evenly distributed in the middle and lower ranges. Secular schools can have as many as 16 percent of the student body from families earning $50,000 or more (See Table 16), but religious schools have fewer families (11 percent) from this category, as seen in Table 15. For the sample as a whole (Table 17), fifty-seven percent of the families earn less than $30,000 annually, while 87 percent less than $50,000. The dominant income group is between $15,000 and $29,000, but at least 13 percent in the total sample earn $50,000 or more.

As indicated in a previous section, the distribution of income presented in Tables 10, 11, and 12 shows a heavy reliance on tuition for meeting school operating costs. But the ability of a school to raise or lower its tuition is contingent upon what families earn and the ability of adminstrators to assess market demands. We found that administrators at only 30 percent of the schools in our sample indicated that it was their practice to collect family income data. Those that said they did collect this information estimated family income to be much lower than the families themselves reported.

For example, most administrators believe that over half their families earn less than $15,000 annually, whereas in fact only 24 percent of their families are in this category. Administrators also believe that families who earn over $50,000 constitute between 1 percent and 3 percent of their enrollment,

Figure 5

HOUSEHOLD SIZE



NOTE: Only within-group comparisons should be made with this illustration (e.g. households within religious schools compared to each other, or households within secular schools compared to each other).

Table 14
FAMILY SIZE IN RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR SCHOOLS
(Reported by Families)

(n=391)

	NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF FAMILIES					
	RELIGIOUS		SECULAR		TOTAL SAMPLE	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
2-3 Members per Family	81	35.8	61	37.0	142	36.3
4-5 Members per Family	118	52.2	81	49.1	199	50.9
6-7 Members per Family	20	8.8	19	11.5	39	10.0
8+ Members per Family	7	3.1	4	2.4	11	2.8
TOTAL	226	100%	165	100%	391	100%

Table 15

FAMILY SIZE AND INCOME IN RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS
(Reported by Families)

	NUMBERS & PERCENTAGES OF FAMILIES				
FAMILY SIZE	Less than $15,000	$15,000-$29,000	$30,000-$49,000	$50,000 or more	ROW TOTAL
2-3 Members:					
Number	**20**	**34**	**15**	**6**	**75**
Percent (Row)	26.7	45.3	20.0	8.0	37.1
Percent (Column)	45.5	47.9	23.3	27.3	
4-5 Members:					
Number	**22**	**28**	**43**	**13**	**106**
Percent (Row)	20.8	26.4	40.6	12.3	52.5
Percent (Column)	50.0	39.4	66.2	59.1	
6-7 Members:					
Number	**1**	**8**	**4**	**3**	**16**
Percent (Row)	6.3	50.0	25.0	18.8	17.9
Percent (Column)	2.3	11.3	6.2	13.6	
8+ Members:					
Number	**1**	**1**	**3**	**0**	**5**
Percent (Row)	20.0	20.0	60.0		2.5
Percent (Column)	2.3	1.4	4.6		
COLUMN TOTAL					
Number	**44**	**71**	**65**	**22**	**202**
Percent	21.8	35.1	32.2	10.9	100.0

Table 16

FAMILY SIZE AND INCOME IN SECULAR SCHOOLS
(Reported by Families)

	NUMBERS & PERCENTAGES OF FAMILIES				
FAMILY SIZE	Less than $15,000	$15,000-$29,000	$30,000-$49,000	$50,000 or more	ROW TOTAL
2-3 Members:					
Number	17	17	15	6	55
Percent (Row)	30.9	30.9	27.3	10.9	35.5
Percent (Column)	40.5	37.0	35.7	24.0	
4-5 Members:					
Number	14	19	23	18	74
Percent (Row)	18.9	25.7	31.1	24.3	47.7
Percent (Column)	33.3	41.3	54.8	72.0	
6-7 Members:					
Number	9	7	4	1	21
Percent (Row)	42.9	33.3	19.0	4.8	13.5
Percent (Column)	21.4	15.2	9.5	4.0	
8+ Members:					
Number	2	3	0	0	5
Percent (Row)	40.0	60.0			3.2
Percent (Column)	4.8	6.5			
COLUMN TOTAL:					
Number	42	46	42	25	155
Percent	27.1	29.7	27.1	16.1	100.0

Table 17

FAMILY SIZE AND INCOME IN TOTAL SAMPLE
(Reported by Families)

FAMILY SIZE	NUMBERS & PERCENTAGES OF FAMILIES: Less than $15,000	$15,000-$29,000	$30,000-$49,000	$50,000 or more	ROW TOTAL
2-3 Members:					
Number	**37**	**51**	**30**	**12**	**130**
Percent (Row)	28.5	39.2	23.1	9.2	36.4
Percent (Column)	43.0	43.6	28.0	25.5	
4-5 Members:					
Number	**36**	**47**	**66**	**31**	**180**
Percent (Row)	20.0	26.1	36.7	17.2	50.4
Percent (Column)	41.9	40.2	61.7	66.0	
6-7 Members:					
Number	**10**	**15**	**8**	**4**	**37**
Percent (Row)	27.0	40.6	21.6	10.8	10.4
Percent (Column)	11.6	12.8	7.5	8.5	
8+ Members:					
Number	**3**	**4**	**3**	**0**	**10**
Percent (Row)	30.0	40.0	30.0		2.8
Percent (Column)	3.5	3.4	2.8		
COLUMN TOTAL:					
Number	**86**	**117**	**107**	**47**	**357**
Percent	24.1	32.7	30.0	13.2	100.0

whereas Tables 15, 16, and 17 show that the actual number is much higher, closer to 13 percent for the total sample (11 percent in religious schools and 16 percent in secular schools). For the most part, higher income families may be utilizing other private school alternatives, or they live in neighborhoods where they perceive the public schools to be "satisfactory."

The families in our sample also displayed a broad range of tuition rates across schools: elementary and secondary, inexpensive and expensive. An administrator from a school where the tuition was as high as that charged in the more traditional predominantly-White schools said of the distribution of families at his school:

> It's pretty much the whole spectrum. We have a number of kids from very affluent families. If you exclude those academic scholarships, we probably have 12 percent who couldn't possibly come here unless they get reduced tuition. A good indication is that last year, we had about 39 percent of our students from single-parent homes -- That was almost certainly a mother...teachers, professionals one way or another. That didn't necessarily mean they were impoverished, but usually they are struggling, even if they have a good income. (80.15)

While we did not specifically inquire about scholarships, Tables 18 and 19 indicate that this may be more applicable at the secondary level than at the elementary level. In fact, the data could be interpreted to show that the less affluent families are not paying high tuition at all.

Table 18

**FAMILIES AT ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
BY INCOME GROUPS AND TUITION PAID**
(Boarding, Religious & Secular;
For Tuition at Independent Neighborhood
Schools and Other Private Schools)

ANNUAL TUITION RANGE	NUMBER OF FAMILIES AT INDEP. NEIGHB. SCHOOLS Less than $15,000	$15,000-$29,000	$30,000-$49,000	$50,000 or more	ROW TOTAL
$150 - $499	11	9	4		24
$500 - $999	7	23	20	5	55
$1,000 - $1,499	13	27	22	12	74
$1,500 - $1,999	5	18	20	7	50
$2,000 - $2,499	2	4	12	6	24
$2,500 - $2,999	1	3	2	4	10
$3,000 - $3,499		1	2	6	9
$3,500 - $3,999		1	3	1	5
$4,000 - $4,999				2	2
$5,000 - $8,500	1				1
COLUMN TOTAL:					
Number	40	86	85	43	254
Percent	15.7	33.9	33.5	16.9	100.0

NOTE 1: This table shows how many families pay tuition in each tuition range, but families reported tuition they paid at independent neighborhood schools and other private schools.

NOTE 2: Tuition reported is for one child attending a school. Some independent neighborhood schools have lower rates for additional children from the same family.

Table 19

**FAMILIES AT SECONDARY SCHOOLS
BY INCOME GROUPS AND TUITION PAID
(Boarding, Religious & Secular;
For Independent Neighborhood Schools
and Other Private Schools)**

ANNUAL TUITION RANGE	NUMBER OF FAMILIES Less than $15,000	$15,000-$29,000	$30,000-$49,000	$50,000 or more	ROW TOTAL
$150 - $499	3	2			5
$500 - $999	2	3	1	1	7
$1,000 - $1,499	7	13	10	1	31
$1,500 - $1,999	8	9	4		21
$2,000 - $2,499	1	1	1	1	4
$2,500 - $2,999	3	3	4		10
$3,000 - $3,499	2	4	1		7
$3,500 - $3,999			3	1	4
$4,000 - $4,999		1		2	3
$5,000 - $8,500		1	4	3	8
COLUMN TOTAL:					
Number	26	37	28	9	100
Percent	26.0	37.0	28.0	9.0	100.0

NOTE 1: This table shows how many families pay tuition in each tuition range, but families reported tuition they paid at independent neighborhood schools and other private schools.

NOTE 2: Tuition reported is for one child attending a school. Some schools have lower rates for additional children from the same family.

There may be several reasons why low-income families can afford to keep their children in independent neighborhood schools. On one hand, the more affluent families, the schools themselves, or both may be sharing the cost of educating the less affluent by absorbing the difference between their established tuition rate and the amount families are able to pay. Some also provide opportunities for volunteer time to be credited to tuition. Another factor could be that families may be supplementing their ability to pay with contributions to tuition payments by members of their extended family. Some principals report that they utilize a sliding scale, whereby families with higher incomes pay more than those with lower incomes. It also may be true that some schools are charging less than the market can bear, and families could be asked to pay more.

One administrator told us that a "natural selection" process among families occurred at his school. When the school opened in 1978, the monthly tuition was $145. It has since been increased to $230. The result has been that he is able to predict with a fair amount of accuracy the employment categories from which families would be likely to select his school. He gave his analysis in this manner:

> They come from all over [name of region] and most of them are here by word of mouth. I guess about 35, 40, 50 percent of them are single parents, and they aspire to have their children have a quality education in a secure environment... [T]hey're basically working parents: secretaries, computer companies, banks, bus drivers, lower to middle class black parents....

> Many parents the first year...got excited but they couldn't afford it. They tried to afford it so we had a lot of struggles when it came to the payment of tuition the first few years. We're past that stage now because people that are here now ...have been here a long time, several years. (77.94)

In our interviews with families we found evidence of a comfortable "fit" for some families between the tuition rates at the independent neighborhood schools and the pocketbooks of many of the families who attended them. The statement which follows was obtained from a parent who perceived the moderate tuition at her child's school as a definite plus. She said:

> It does a lot of good in the community in that it affords people who normally could not afford to send their children to private school low enough tuition for them to send them to private school. I think that for what the parents get, the $230 or whatever it is a month is fantastic. It really is. And the children are learning. I can't believe it! I was in another private school situation and that private school cost $3800. (77.37)

Another parent whose child was in elementary school indicated that she convinced herself that she could afford the tuition at her daughter's school by looking at it in the context of the after-school-care costs she would have had to pay had her daughter attended public school. She stated:

> The tuition is comfortable for me....That was another reason that helped me decide to go. It would have been the same thing had I been able to

> bus my daughter and pay for day care afterwards....It all evened out to be the same price. (40.20)

We also found evidence that though the tuition levels set by the schools were comfortable for some, they were thought to be a prohibitive factor for other families in the community who might have considered enrolling their children. Many families indicated that they had to give a considerable amount of thought to enrolling their children in independent neighborhood schools, even those with relatively low tuition costs, because it strained the family's budget. It must be kept in mind that more than 80 percent of the families in our sample reported annual income of $30,000 or less. Statements such as the those that follow are typical of the statements we encountered.

> I think its money. A lot of parents would love to have their children in private schools where the classrooms are not running over...and the children are getting what they need, not just some of it. (40.37)

> At the particular time why I didn't start the children off in the beginning was I felt that I wasn't financially able to handle it. (52.26)

Most of the families we interviewed regarded tuition payments as necessary sacrifices they were willing to make in order to obtain what they perceived as quality education for their children. One parent felt she was getting a bargain:

> I'm not looking to pay more, but I know the quality of education our children are getting is worth more, you know, than what we're paying. (52.54)

Making the sacrifice to pay the tuition was the norm among the families we interviewed. The following represent two examples of how families tend to view this sacrifice.

> They started the school but I didn't enroll when they first started. I thought, "Oh, I don't have that kind of money," you know....But, you spend money on other things so you might as well sacrifice for your child. (40.49)

> We had a truck that my husband had bought and his truck payments were $470 a month and he met those. When the Lord told us that he wanted our children to be put into Christian school, he also showed us how to pay for it. So, we sold the truck and money that we would have been putting in the truck is going into tuition fees and uniforms, and with an abundance left over. That's how we do it. (58. 92)

3. Distance from School

> Most children attending these schools live less than three miles away. However, some affluent families and some poor families will travel large distances to attend these schools.

The greatest number of pupils attending independent neighborhood schools live within three miles of the school, as seen in Table 20. In fact, the mean distance of family residence from the school for our sample is only 1.8 miles.

Tables 21 and 22 show that these families who live within three miles of the school are more likely to earn between $15,000 and $30,000, although a significant number (25 percent) within three miles earn less than $15,000. Approximately one-third of the families under three miles also earn between $30,000 and $49,000.

Figure 6 shows that the greatest proportion of families earning less than $15,000 live less than three miles away (63 percent of the families at religious schools and 47 percent of the families at secular schools). Tables 21 and 22, as well as Figure 6, also show that some families earning less than $15,000 are making a special effort to get to secular schools by traveling over 35 miles every day.

There is an inverse relationship between distance of residence from the school and the percentage of students enrolled: the further away families live, the less likely they are to be enrolled. When the distance from the school increase to a radius of 4 to 8 miles, the percentage of total enrollment decreases by nearly half. The percentage of students enrolled does not significantly decrease unless they live more than 21 miles away. In other words, families seem able to cover distances of up up to 21 miles every day in order to bring their children to independent neighborhood schools.

We encountered only a few schools that provided their own bus service. Since families must bear the burden of getting

Table 20

ENROLLMENT BY DISTANCE FROM SCHOOL

(n=331)

	NUMBER OF FAMILIES					
	Religious		Secular		Total Sample	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
MILES FROM SCHOOL						
0 to 3	103	55.4	64	44.1	167	50.5
4 to 8	42	22.6	39	26.9	81	24.5
9 to 20	33	17.7	24	16.6	57	17.2
21 to 35	8	4.3	12	8.3	20	6.0
Over 35	0	0	6	4.1	6	1.8
TOTAL	186	100.0	145	100.0	331	100.0

NOTE: Boarding schools are excluded because most of the families live a considerable distance from the school, and their small number would misrepresent the "over 35" category.

Table 21

FAMILIES AT RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS
BY INCOME GROUPS AND DISTANCE FROM SCHOOL

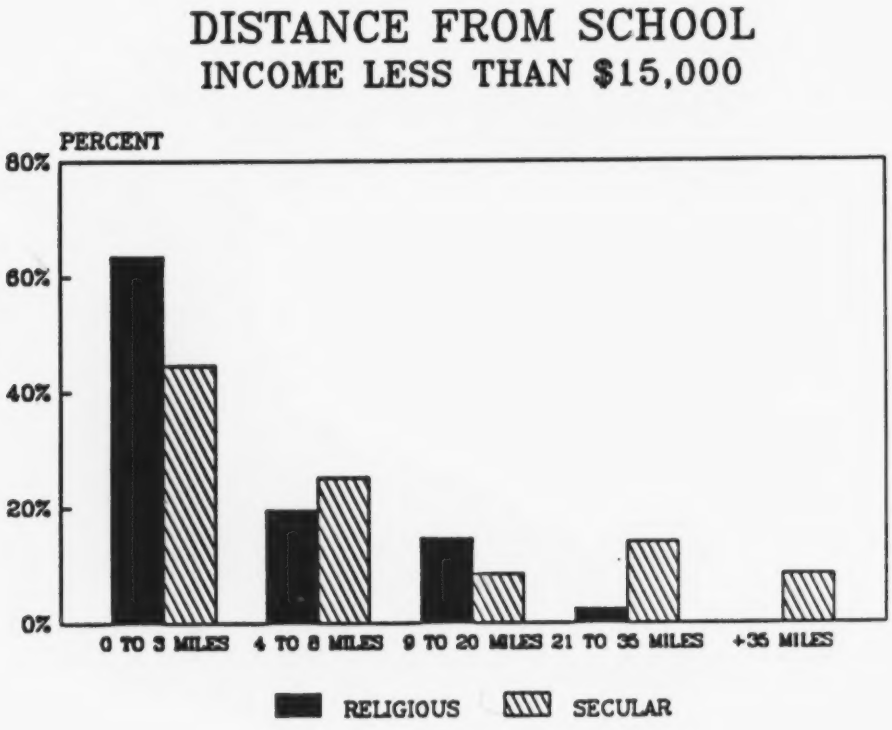
MILES	NUMBER OF FAMILIES				
	Less than $15,000	$15,000-$29,000	$30,000-$49,000	$50,000 or more	ROW TOTAL
0 to 3	26	37	32	8	103
4 to 8	8	13	16	5	42
9 to 20	6	14	6	7	33
21 to 35	1	2	4	1	8
Over 35	0	0	0	0	0
COLUMN TOTAL:					
Number	41	66	58	21	186
Percent	22.0	35.5	31.2	11.3	100.0

Table 22

**FAMILIES AT SECULAR SCHOOLS
BY INCOME GROUPS AND DISTANCE FROM SCHOOL**

	NUMBER OF FAMILIES				
MILES	Less than $15,000	$15,000-$29,000	$30,000-$49,000	$50,000 or more	ROW TOTAL
0 to 3	16	19	23	6	64
4 to 8	9	13	8	9	39
9 to 20	3	8	6	7	24
21 to 35	5	2	2	3	12
Over 35	3	1	2		6
COLUMN TOTAL:					
Number	36	43	41	25	145
Percent	24.8	29.7	28.3	7.2	100.0

Figure 6



NOTE: Only within-group comparisons should be made.

their children to school daily, the inverse relationship shown between the distance a family lives from the school and the percentage of families enrolled may reflect family income and the neighborhoods which surround the schools.

4. How Families Learn About Schools

Families usually learn about independent neighborhood schools from other families who have children enrolled there.

Most families learned about the schools through personal referrals by families who have children in the schools, alumni or family members, as seen in Table 23. The religiously-affiliated schools are found through well-known church or community programs, such as day care. The greatest number of secular schools were found through the media or the families themselves discovered the schools in their own neighborhoods.

School administrators report that they usually promote their institutions by holding major school events, either annually or occasionally. However, there is little use of paid media advertisement and even less "free" media coverage utilized as promotional strategies. (See Table 24.)

Table 23

HOW FAMILIES LEARN ABOUT INDEPENDENT NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOLS

	(N=380) PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOLS RESPONDING		
:	Religious	Secular	Total Sample
Personal Referral	59.1	54.4	57.1
Referral by Group	29.1	16.9	24.0
Media	11.8	28.7	18.9
	100%	100%	100%

Table 24

HOW SCHOOLS ARE PROMOTED IN THE COMMUNITY

(n=73)

	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS ENGAGING IN EACH ACTIVITY				
	Annual	Monthly	Occasion -ally	Quartly	Not Done
Major Event (Public Invited Free)	25	2	13	7	25
Major Event (Paid Admission)	20		12	9	32
Publication (Own Books, Pamphlets)	13	2	13	4	40
Newsletter	2	11	9	14	33
Purchased Media Ads	13	5	16	4	31
Free Media Coverage	4	1	4	2	59
Sourvenir jrnls/books	12		11	3	47
Personal Visits to Donors	5	2	20		46

5. Occupation and Education

The families who were most committed to choice in education worked in occupations that did not require a great deal of academic preparation.

Mothers and fathers[62] were classified according to the level of academic preparation required for the occupations that created their income and apparent lifestyle, as well as the formal academic training they reported having. They were placed in three groups representing their various backgrounds: "Unspecialized," "Specialized training," and "Advanced Academic Study."[63] These groups are shown in Table 25, and a complete list of the occupational titles actually used by mothers, fathers, or other heads of household may be found in Appendix VI.

Income levels of families at religious and secular schools were also compared to education levels to see if there

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[62]The families in the survey were asked to respond to items labelled "mothers" and "fathers," and this is presumed to also represent other female and male guardians.

[63]We recognize that a more traditional grouping would use labels such as unskilled, skilled, clerical/white collar, professional, or it would rank individuals by level of responsibility, such as rank-and-file workers, supervisors, middle managers, or executives. Neither of these groupings is satisfactory for the purposes of this study. Furthermore, at least one major analysis of labor statistics has successfully utilized a classification system very similar to the one used in this study. [See: U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. (1986). Project 2000. Washington, D.C.: Author.]

was any dissonance between income and level of education, and this appears in Table 26. The distribution of family education levels between religious and secular schools is shown in Table 27. Finally, the education levels of mothers and fathers is graphically illustrated in Figure 8.

The purpose of this approach is to determine if the independent neighborhood schools were havens for an elite group of middle class or affluent families, or whether they were the product of social activism by a small group of intellectuals, or a movement that is more deeply rooted among large numbers of working-class and less-educated families. The data show that there is a broad mix of parents with different levels of education, and it is unclear, who, if anyone, is leading this movement to independent neighborhood schools.

Most of the mothers (59.1%) who reported their occupations were in the category of unspecialized workers. This group includes factory workers, machine operators, students, painters, practical nurses, postal clerks, transit workers, clerical supervisors, case managers, laborers, and real estate associates.

They were followed by mothers in the specialized category (32%), representing registered nurses, teachers, police officers, accountants, guidance counsellors, ministers, health educators, computer analysts, tape librarians, electronic engineers,electricians, firemen, probation officers, funeral

Table 25

OCCUPATIONS OF MOTHERS AND FATHERS CLASSIFIED BY LEVEL OF FORMAL SCHOOLING

	NUMBER AND PERCENT OF FAMILIES					
	Religious		Secular		Total Sample	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
MOTHER'S OCCUPATION:						
Advanced Academic	4	1.8	11	6.8	15	3.9
Specialized	61	27.1	61	37.9	122	31.6
Unspecialized	146	64.9	82	50.9	228	59.1
Divorced-Retired	6	2.7	1	0.6	7	1.8
Unemployed	1	0.4	2	1.2	3	0.8
Self-Employed	7	3.1	4	2.5	11	2.8
TOTAL	225	100%	161	100%	386	100%
FATHER'S OCCUPATION:						
Advanced Academic	7	3.6	13	8.7	20	5.8
Specialized	54	27.7	41	27.5	95	27.6
Unspecialized	109	55.9	57	39.3	166	48.3
Divorced-Retired	13	6.7	27	18.1	40	11.6
Unemployed	6	3.1	6	4.0	12	3.5
Self-Employed	6	3.1	5	3.4	11	3.2
TOTAL	195	100%	149	100%	344	100%

Table 26

FAMILY LEVELS OF EDUCATION BY INCOME GROUPS

HIGHEST EDUCATION	NUMBER OF FAMILIES Less than $15,000	$15,000-$29,000	$30,000-$49,000	$50,000 or more	ROW TOTAL
RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS:					
Elementary	3	1	2		6
Junior High	4	2			6
Senior High	22	30	15	9	76
Tech Sch/Coll	5	17	14	2	38
4-Yr University	7	15	17	8	47
Post-Graduate	2	7	15	3	27
TOTAL	43	72	63	22	200
PERCENT	21.5	36.0	31.5	11.0	100%
SECULAR SCHOOLS:					
Elementary	2				2
Junior High	3	3			6
Senior High	17	11	7	4	39
Tech Sch/Coll	9	5	11		25
4-Yr University	9	18	12	6	45
Post-Graduate	3	10	12	14	39
TOTAL	43	47	42	24	156
PERCENT	27.6	30.1	26.9	15.4	100%

NOTE: Boarding schools are excluded.

Table 27

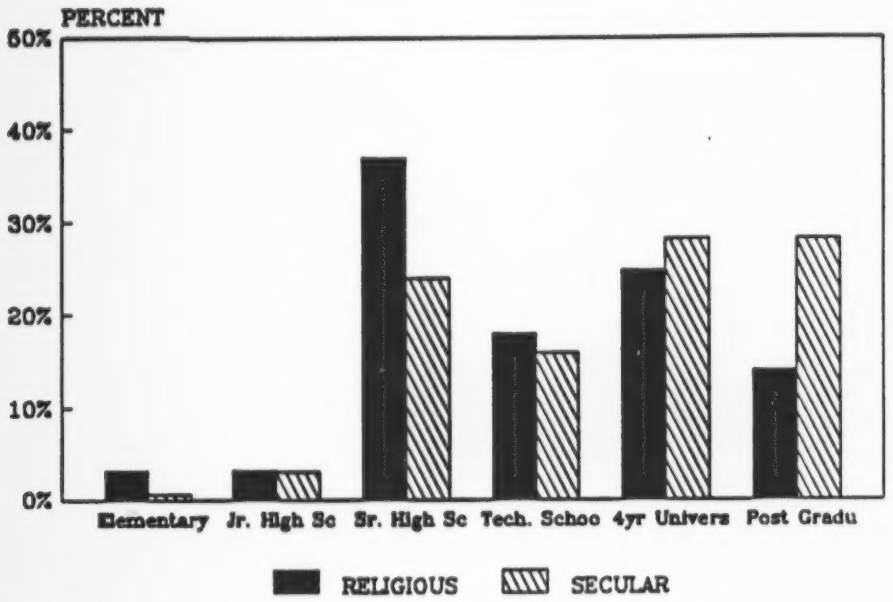
FAMILY EDUCATION LEVELS AT RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR SCHOOLS

HIGHEST EDUCATION	NUMBER AND PERCENT OF FAMILIES					
	Religious		Secular		Total Sample	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
MOTHER:						
Elementary	7	3.2	1	0.6	8	2.1
Junior High	7	3.2	5	3.1	12	3.1
Senior High	82	36.9	39	23.9	121	31.4
Tech Sch/Coll	40	18.0	26	16.0	66	17.1
4-Yr University	55	24.8	46	28.2	101	26.2
Post Graduate	31	14.0	46	28.2	77	20.0
TOTAL	222	100%	163	100%	385	100%
FATHER:						
Elementary	6	3.0	2	1.4	8	2.3
Junior High	15	7.4	6	4.2	21	6.1
Senior High	81	39.9	53	37.3	134	38.8
Tech Sch/Coll	38	18.7	24	16.9	62	18.0
4-Yr University	44	21.7	31	21.8	75	21.7
Post Graduate	19	9.4	26	18.3	45	13.0
TOTAL	203	100%	142	100%	345	100%

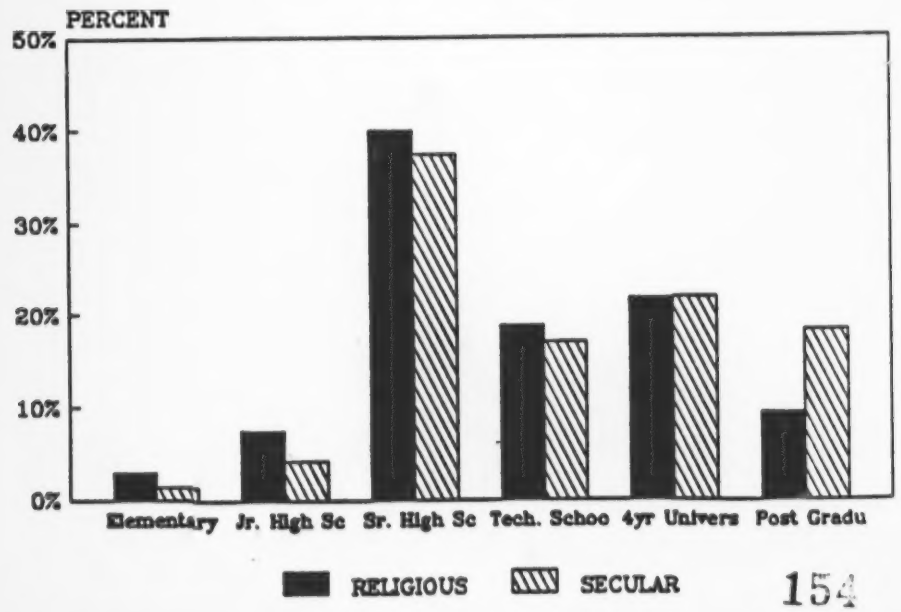
"DARE TO CHOOSE"

Figure 8

MOTHER'S EDUCATIONAL LEVEL
RELIGIOUS VS. SECULAR



FATHER'S EDUCATIONAL LEVEL
RELIGIOUS VS. SECULAR



NOTE: Only within-group comparisons should be made.

directors, and draftsmen.[64]

For fathers reporting occupations, 48 percent were from the unspecialized group, followed by 27.5 percent in the specialized group. However, the information provided for the occupations of fathers was different from that for the mothers in that there were 11.6 percent of the fathers in the "not-present" category, compared to only 1.8 percent of the mothers in that category.

6. Choosing an Independent Neighborhood School

> **Families usually decide first to leave public school, then look for "a good school," select an independent neighborhood school and, based on their experiences in the new environment, finally decide to stay.**

Our in-depth interviews with families revealed that choosing an independent neighborhood school is a complex process

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[64]For comparison, one other category is for advanced academic (including college instructors, social workers, journalists, medical doctors, lawyers, microbiologists, psychologists, computer engineers, electrical engineers, civil engineers, pharmacists, and economists). Other categories include the unemployed and the self-employed.

that actually involves at least three major decisions. First, after forming ideas about what is wrong with public schools, families make the decision to seek other options for schooling their children. Second, families begin looking for "a good school," and when they observe some qualities that they like in an independent neighborhood school, they choose one. Third, once their children are enrolled in an independent neighborhood school, their experiences in this "new" environment result in a decision to stay.

We found, during the interviews, that the factors influencing these three decisions are often interwoven into a single summary of what actually took place. However, the three decisions are distinguishable and can be considered indvidually.

The most frequently mentioned factors that influence a family's choice of an independent neighborhood school are associated with the "learning environment" and "academic" reasons. Less frequently mentioned are "religious" reasons and reasons associated with affirming a child's own cultural background, called "culture affirmation" in this study. (See Table 28). When families are asked what they expect their children will achieve by being enrolled in an independent neighborhood school, "academic" factors are mentioned nearly three times as often as "cultural affirmation" factors, which are second in frequency and mentioned six times more often than "religious" factors, which were third in frequency (See Table

29). The components of these classification are shown in Table 30). The pattern of responses from the families is consistent with what administrators indicated to be the main expectations of independent neighborhood schools that families have said to them (Table 31).

The importance of these factors in determining why families choose independent neighborhood schools for their children and in deciding to keep them enrolled in one can be seen, first of all, in the context of family dissatisfaction with the public schools. Next, we will examine the family criteria for choosing and, ultimately, staying with independent neighborhood schools.

PARTING COMPANY WITH THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

There is much to suggest that dissatisfaction with the treatment African-American students have experienced in urban public schools is a major reason why their families seek options in education outside the public school system. The annual Gallup Poll on public attitudes toward public schools indicates a steady decline throughout the 1970s in the percentage of respondents who gave high marks to the public schools in their communities. The poll also indicates that the public schools were held in lowest esteem by African-Americans living in the "central cities of the

Table 28

WHY FAMILIES CHOOSE INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

EXPECTATIONS	NUMBER OF RESPONSES		
	Religious	Secular	Total Sample
Learning Environment	171	126	297
Academic Reasons	106	70	176
Religious Education	57	14	71
Culture-Affirming	5	38	43
Cost	9	14	23
TOTAL	348	262	610

NOTE: The total number of families responding is 383. The gross number of separate responses (a parent sometimes giving more than one reason) is 610.

These were responses to "open-ended" questions, and the meanings intended by the families may not be identical to those of the administrators.

Table 29

EXPECTATIONS FAMILIES HAVE FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THEIR CHILDREN

EXPECTATIONS	NUMBER OF RESPONSES		
	Religious	Secular	Total Sample
Academic	198	135	333
Culture Affirming	52	70	122
Religious	43	11	54
TOTAL	293	216	509

NOTE: The total number of families responding is 220. The gross number of separate responses (a parent sometimes giving more than one reason) is 376.

These were responses to "open-ended" questions, and the meanings intended by the families may not be identical to those of the administrators.

Table 30

CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM FOR FAMILY EXPECTATIONS AND REASONS FOR CHOOSING INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

QUESTION 10, FAMILY EXPECTATIONS: We asked families: "When your children complete their studies at this independent school, what do you expect them to know?" The responses of were classified under the following headings and codes:

Academic:

* Basic skills
  "Highly advanced in basic skills"

* Preparation for College/Job/Self-Employment
  "Established private school"
  "Help the world to become better"
  "Not enter remedial courses in college"
  "better prepare for public school"

* Academic knowledge to surpass national norms.

* Analytical skills/advanced skills
  "highly educated"
  leadership capabilities

Culture Affirmation:

* Respect for Culturre
  "having an edge in knowing another culture"
  English first/Spanish second
  Black history, Indian history, Asian history
  Hispanics - an historical perspective

* Self-Esteem/Confidence:
  "independent in decisionmaking"
  "able to socialize"
  "how to behave in cultured, refined manner"

Religious:

* Non-sectarian
  Knowledge of God
  Spiritual awareness
  Values or Bible knowledge

Table 30 continued:

QUESTION 11, REASONS FOR CHOOSING A SCHOOL: We asked families: "What were your two major reasons for choosing an independent school?" The responses were classified under the following headings and codes:

Culture Affirmation

* Ethnic surroundings/ African reinforcement
  "culture and support"
  "lack of racism"
  "Afrocentric point of view"
  "neighborhood surroundings"
  "Black-oriented" or "bilingual"
  "get away from gangs and drugs"
  "Black teachers/family atmosphere"
  "closest to my philosophy"

Academic

* Academic superiority
  "Quality" (including better teachers & students)
  "professional"
  "a reputation for quality"
  "teachers have more interest in children"
  "teachers really determined to teach"

* Affordable price

Learning Environment

* Personal growth:
  discipline/small school/small classes
  individual attention
  good teacher-student ratio
  "Child satisfied. Child chose it."

* Convenient location

* Not satisfied with public school

* Safe and dependable:
  "very well organized
  "dependable day care"
  "drug free"
  extended family atmosphere

Table 30 continued:

* **Parental role in school:**
  "the part we could play as parents"

Religious

* **Christian Education**
  Religious background of teachers
  Denominational teachings
  Nondenominational interest

Table 31

EDUCATION OUTCOMES ADMINISTRATORS BELIEVE THEIR SCHOOLS OFFER

(n=58)

	Rank	Reasons	Responses
RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS:			
	1-2	(Academic reputation	24%
	1-2	(Discipline	24%
	3	Religious reasons*	22%
SECULAR SCHOOLS:			
	1	Academic reputation	32%
	2	Cultural factors**	26%
	3	Discipline	14%
TOTAL SAMPLE:			
	1	Academic reputation	28%
	2	Discipline	20%
	3	Cultural factors	15%
	4	Religious reasons	12%

NOTE: "Religious reasons" include both religious content of the curriculum and religious affiliation of the school.
"Cultural factors" include the cultural content of the curriculum and feelings of cultural kinship or solidarity.

North,"[65] and as we have shown, the greatest number of independent neighborhood schools are located in these cities. This dissatisfaction helps, in part, to explain why 44 percent of the independent neighborhood schools in this sample were established in the 1970s (See Table 3).

The question of how families decide to part company with public schools will be considered in light of the four categories discussed in Table 28: Learning environment, academic reasons, culture affirmation, and religious reasons.

Public School "Learning Environment"

By far the most often mentioned reasons for enrolling children in independent neighborhood schools are related to the public school learning environment. Overcrowding and the inability of teachers to provide sufficient individual attention to the needs of various children are examples of problems associated with the learning environment. In the example that follows, the parent illustrates how the number of students in the class adversely affected her son. However, there is also reason to be concerned about the skills of the teacher in this particular instance:

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[65]Gallup, George. (1979, September). Annual Gallup Poll of Public Attitudes Toward Public Schools. Phi Delta Kappan, pp. 13-25.

> Classrooms was very large, the sizes....I tried him...for kindergarten for one year and to me, I thought it was waste of time. He actually did not learn anything. He was way above the rest of the students. Therefore, he just sat with the students, and because the teacher wasn't able to find out what he knew, at the end of the year she couldn't tell me he could count to a hundred. When he left Montessori at three years old, he was counting to a hundred by fives, tens, and hundred, and she didn't even realize....I tried to tell her, but she didn't believe me. So that's why I made sure he didn't go to public school. (58.31)

Another illustration from a different parent at the same school points to administrative problems that prevent public school teachers from being effective:

> Years ago we found teachers really seemed to take a special interest in the children, and I'm not saying that to say that there are teachers who still don't, but I'm saying that the teachers have such a load on them now in the public schools, they have overcrowded classes and some schools don't have adequate materials. So therefore, they don't really -- they can't really do the job they would like to do. I have a lot of friends who are teachers, and they complain a lot that they can't do the job because there's so much paperwork to be done...So it's the system working against them more than anything else. But my children have never really wanted to go to public school, because they also recognize there are problems there. (58.57)

Sometimes families recalled their own public school experience with large classes and their own feelings of neglect. This recollection of public school was enough to prevent them from sending their own children. Here is an example:

> RESEARCHER: Do you remember anything that occurred when you were in school that influenced you, that may have contributed to your decision to enroll your son here...?
>
> PARENT: Yes. Well, the classes were all too large. Like, the teachers didn't have enough time, you know. The teachers really didn't have time to go over it with an individual, you know. (40.46)

The way children with special needs are treated is another area in which families felt the learning environment in the public schools worked against the interests of their children. In the following example, a gifted child encountered difficulty and the parent decided that public school education would not work.

> [My son's] been shown to be academically gifted through testing and evaluation, and they were just trying to crucify him in public school. We really had a horrible experience....(23.116)

A common fear among families is that their children would be unfairly labeled and placed in special education classes. This feeling produced statements like this one:

> Well, one day I'd taken off from work and I went up to the school where my children were...My daughter was attending and they had her in this class and I wondered why she was in this particular class. So they begin to tell me that they was going to test her for a learning problem because she's just a slow learner. So I said wasn't you supposed to contact me and ask me concerning this before you did this, you know? So they said that someone in the office supposedly had contacted me, and I was supposed to have know about this....I said no, it's not so.... (52.26)

We might add that the student in the previous example was tested independently and found not to be learning disabled, and since then, she has done well in an independent neighborhood school.

The statement which follows was provided by a parent who had been a public school teacher. It summarizes very well the fears that families have of a learning environment which is characterized by large classes and teachers who are not able to provide enough individual attention.

> I think that basically in public school the teacher teaches towards the average child and if you can do more than the average child then a lot of teachers are not perceptive enough to give your child -- you know, to just kind of sit there and wait until someone catches up. Or if you're a little slow, that teacher doesn't often always have the time to foster that learning that perhaps you have missed in that school situation. (76.52)

Emotional support was felt to be lacking in the public school environment in some instances. One father was very disheartened over the failure by a public school his son attended to acknowledge a noteworthy achievement in a national event.

> In the public school [son's name] was in the second grade when he participated in the "Olympics of the Mind" competition and...his teacher decided he was going to be it. And he took them, he was a star performer, he took them to the second place award championship in Akron, Ohio. Okay. He came back and they did not even congratulate this kid...The school in large did not congratulate this kid. I mean they had all these preliminary competitions and what have you, and support just was not there. (23.119)

Fear for personal safety was another factor families cited for leaving public schools. The last example of parental concerns about the learning environment of public schools is a striking one. It concerns a sixth grade boy who was made the victim of gang terrorism. His mother tells the story.

> I thought he was on drugs... when he come home he won't do anything, just lay across the bed and say, "Please, I don't want to go to school today."
>
> I said, "What's wrong, you don't want to go to school? You're just lazy." I just went crazy on him....Finally he got to the point he couldn't even get back home. Somebody stole his watch, his bookcase, his tennis shoes, bus pass, everything....When he got off the bus they would come there three of them and just rip his pockets and take everything out....
>
> He walked in that school and you know he got in a fight with three boys and he kicked one on the leg. They expelled him two weeks for fighting back....I took him out of that school and he didn't go to school the rest of the year. (18.17)

"Academic" Reasons

Academic types of concerns were the second most often mentioned reasons for choosing an independent neighborhood school (See Table 28) and the reasons most often mentioned as part of their expectations regarding educational outcomes (see Table 29). There was general feeling that public schools were not as challenging academically as they should be. One parent made

arrangements to visit the public school her son would have attended and look at the curriculum. She said the following about her decision:

> Before I had made my decision I did go to a teacher that taught at...the school my son would attend if he went to public school and I told him what he could do and should I just go ahead and send him to private school where he'll get that kind of special attention, or should I send him to public school and he went over the curriculum with me and I just felt that he would be more challenged going to a private school setting. (76.48)

Many families we interviewed expressed an interest in early learning of academic skills. Preschool programs, even those based on accepted models of early childhood education, are thought of as places where children played all day or were cared for but were not introduced to "real" work. One parent told us the following:

> A nursery setting is a little like play, you know. They get the basic stuff, like they learn their alphabet and how to count. I think [her children] were counting to about 20 when they got to nursery school. But, insofar as writing and learning all these other different things, math and science and Spanish...they were not getting that in nursery school because nurseries cannot afford to provide that. (19.7)

Most of the families we interviewed had a definite awareness of the possible negative effects of pushing children toward academics at too early an age. However, there was also the belief that "pushing kids to do whatever they can do at their

age" is what schools are supposed to do. Families did not want their children pushed beyond their abilities, but most of them believed that children needed to be pushed to reach their potential.

This emphasis on early learning of academic skills was frequently considered by families to be representative of a school's approach to individualized instruction. One father of twins pointed out that his sons were different in their levels development. He told us that he and his wife "...sort of detect that one might be more alert than the other and they have differences. (19.12)" This family informed us that they wanted a school in which both twins would be treated as individuals. They did not want their children pushed, but they also did not want either of them to be held back because of the other. The father, who was clearly hesitant to say anything critical of public schools, said:

> Now public school tends to -- Well, I don't want to put -- I don't want to say anything about public schools, but they tend to sort of hold people back instead of letting them go....I'm experiencing that now with one of my nephews....They're sort of holding him back and they say, well, he talks a lot. Well, you know, he has no interest and he is bored, so he spends his time talking. (19.13)

One reason why some families fear public schools is the reaction they have to media reports about the problems in big city public schools. A parent, who had the rare distinction of

having had only a brief encounter with public school education, recalled that experience and added that media reports provided the final bit of evidence she needed to keep her children out of public schools. She stated:

> I felt out of place because, you know, I'm sitting there raising my hand and never got recognized, and pretty soon I learned, well, if you want to get recognized, you just stand up or you just shout out whatever it was you wanted to say...
>
> After having that experience and just hearing a little bit from the news about what's going on with the public schools and that type of thing, I knew for sure that I did not want my children in public schools. (52.46)

"Religious" Reasons

As one might expect, the families whose children attended religious independent neighborhood schools sometimes indicated that religious reasons influenced them in their decision to leave or avoid public schools (See Table 28). Much of this concern is the result of rulings regarding prayer in public schools. The following statement provided by a parent who was once a public school teacher is representative of many families in religiously-based independent neighborhood schools.

> I also believe in the religious program they took out of the public schools some time ago, and I really feel it's lacking. I can recall we...had respect and manners. But after teaching...I feel we need prayer back in the schools. (58.38)

The lack of " Christian discipline" in the public schools was something to which a number of families indicated their objection. The following example is provided by the mother of ninth and eleventh graders. She stated:

> So many things are happening in the public school until I wanted to give [my daughter] a Christian atmosphere to be able to be disciplined properly. (52.24)

Another parent expressed voiced nearly identical concerns in equating the absence of prayer in the public schools with a decline in discipline.

> [My son is] not a bad child, don't get me wrong -- but he needs the discipline...I think schools throughout the country, the United States as a whole, have suffered greatly since they took prayer out of the school system....And prayer in schools, I think, makes it better, and I think it hasn't helped the public school system. So that't why I chose to leave -- or have my son brought up in Christian academy. (52.73)

A different type of concern expressed by one mother pertained to the feeling that too many of her son's public school classmates did not attend church. These students, in her opinion, were exerting negative peer pressure on her son. She states:

> ...I found in 6th grade that most of the children that was in his class, I would say 97 percent of them didn't go to church...some of them had never been to church, and they admitted that they had never been to church....There was one little boy in his class that even asked him what do the praying hands mean when he saw it on the

> bulletin board, and did it have anything to do with God.... (58.12)

"Culture Affirmation"

Early in each interview, we would ask our informants open-ended questions about the factors that influenced them to select a particular school for their children. In some instances, there would be no reference to anything associated with the school's racial makeup or the attention given to racial and cultural matters in the school curriculum. During the course of our interview with these families, however, something would almost invariably be said that revealed a strong concern with such matters. Most often the statement that would trigger the discussion would have to do with something in the public school environment that did not foster positive culture affirmation for African-American children.

Many families had experiences in public school situations where the enrollment was integrated and did not feel that African-American students were treated fairly. Here is what one parent who had been a public school teacher said:

> Well, I'm going to tell you, I taught at an integrated school...and my experience there was that the Black youngsters in that school were basically put in slow classes. They were basically identified as children that were disruptive. They were not really moved up unless there was someone perceptive enough there to see

> this child needs to be put on a different level....In an integrated setting, I find that Black students tend -- I don't think they're treated as equals as far as infractions that have occurred.... (76.54)

In one unusual case a mother who came to the United States from another country in which the society was multi-racial soon observed that the treatment of African-Americans in public schools was similiar to the treatment of what she referred to as "dark skins" in the schools in her native land. She said:

> [W]hen I came to the United States and saw the people -- my husband's nieces and nephews coming out of high school...most of them couldn't hardly write. English was bad, terrible, and that sort of reflected on the public schools itself. So when I had children I decided that I was not going to send them to a public school because that was the impression it gave me. You know, that public schools don't really do too much. Sort of similiar to [her country]...the Blacks here being the same way we were.... (77.2)

We encountered some families who felt that the public schools were just not concerned about African-American culture and history, and this was considered to be harmful to the development of their children. One father expressed his feelings this way:

> I was born on the picket line. My mama's been involved in the struggle, gosh, ever since I can remember. And I was always taking my kids to things involving Black people and desperately seeking extra-curricular activities and trying to encourage the schools, you know. These Black kids, teach them their heritage. They weren't about that. Black History Month...it dwindled to

> a week and that type of thing...it was absolutely pathetic. (23.119)

This same father also had very strong feelings about what he perceived to be a serious shortage of African-American male role models in public schools. He went on to say:

> The other thing is trying to find a Black male teacher -- in public school is almost impossible, you know. So [my son] was like in this sea of women all the time....I can support him as much as I can but I didn't know...exactly how to help him or whatever. (23.120)

THE CHOICE: LOOKING FOR "A GOOD SCHOOL"

The decisions families make when they choose for the first time to send their children to an independent neighborhood school are based on the assumptions they have about what represents "a good school" and what they do not like about public schools.

In the previous section it was quite clear that the families we interviewed felt they had good reason to part company with public schools. The experiences they recounted were the bases on which they formed opinions and acted on them. In this section we will take a similiar look at what the families said they looked for, once they had decided that they were in the market for an educational option.

"Learning Environment"

A family's first meeting with the director of a school has a great deal of impact on the family's decision making, because they obtained their first impression of what the learning environment at the school might be like through the director. Qualities in administrators that were mentioned often were sincerity, caring, professional, and religious. The following are some examples of how families described their first meetings with school directors.

> Well, I came up and talked with [director] and had a long conversation with her and when I saw how sincere she was about educating Black kids, not only Black kids, but I'm saying educating children...and I just took it from there. (19.58)

> [T]hey came very well recommended by the [state] accrediting board and that was why I chose it. And then when we came and talked with [director] and [two assistants] and they seemed to very nice people, church-going people and that was a plus in my corner. (19.2)

The relatively small size of the classes at independent neighborhood schools affords teachers the opportunity to individualize instruction. This quality was mentioned often. In this example, one mother went looking for a private school because her son was being retained in his present grade in public school. She stated:

> I didn't feel that he was getting the personal attention that he needed. I felt like, well, knowing [him], that he needed a closer atmosphere

> and he needed constant on-hand care, you know, however you say it. And I felt the private school would be better for him because of the sizes of the classes and this school offered a limited amount of children per class and...I felt like the teachers would get to know him better and he would do better. (76, p.33)

External qualities can also be important to families who are trying to make an assessment of what the learning environment is like before enrolling their children. One new parent said,

> One of the things I'm most impressed with is the school is run like a business. They're very serious. They're very professional. The appearance of the school, the decorum, the reception, the sense of order, all of those things. And if children are brought up -- educated in an environment like this, it will order their lives. If they're educated in a chaotic environment, it will disorder their lives, and I think too much of that is happening. (52.4)

"Academic" Reasons

Parents want a well-rounded academic curriculum to be the foundation of a school. They want their children to be challenged because they feel that this is the best way to prepare them to be "self-sufficient and self supporting" in adult life. One parent described what she looked for this way:

> [T]he science, the social studies and phys. ed, they'll fall in place, but that foundation of math and English, math and reading, they must have. So, I guess when I'm picking a school, I'm

> looking for a curriculum that has a strong academic -- and that's English, math, science...social studies, things like that. (58.37)

Another illustration comes from a parent who works part time at the school that she and her husband chose for their daughter. She stated:

> Well, we're still making the decisions for her since she's 13 years old....and we both decided that this was the school that she would come to. Not only because I work here but because by working here I know some of the in's and out's and I knew that she would get a good, good firsthand education. (48.25)

"Religious" Reasons

Religion is seen by families as a means of providing their young with moral guidance, an aid to a parent trying to bring up a child in a difficult environment. In the example which follows, a parent has an academically advanced daughter who will enter college two years early. This parent's reasons for wanting a religious environment are quite specific:

> She's younger than her academic grade level and she's higher than the age level. So I wanted to put her in an environment where I thought would keep her from becoming too involved with children older than herself. And I wanted her to have a Christian education and make a different commitment to insure there were some safeguards with her having to go into college at a very young age. (52.10)

Another parent of a high school senior saw the religious emphasis of her daughter's school in a similiar manner. She said, "I put my children here because of the education, the educational standards and the moral training they get here." (48.1)

"Culture affirming"

Some families felt that African-American teachers naturally cared more for African-American children than did other teachers. One parent stated why she preferred such a setting:

> I notice at the schools where the staff is predominantly white they just don't seem to know how to love our children for themselves. They tend to want to group children into some category, like this is a bright kid, this is a kid who causes some problems because he is a little disruptive or he daydreams...and they base everything that child does oftentimes of what they have formulated...their prejudicial kind of feeling about that child when they first see them. (58.77)

In another parent's viewpoint a "Black majority" environment helped to foster self confidence. She said:

> I saw the benefit of sending them to a Black as opposed to the white majority, because I think they can probably succeed much more and have more confidence.... (77.3)

There was virtually no mention of culture-affirming criteria for selecting a school, except for the racial makeup of the staff. In many instances, even when the setting was 100 percent African-American, families would indicate that they were not concerned beyond being in a "Black environment." This seems to reflect a strong faith in control of the school environment to foster culture affirmation. This is reflected in the following statement:

> I don't want my child to be in a school and to get the subliminal message that white means you're superior or you have to strive to be like a person of the Caucasian race to succeed. I want my child to understand that there is a basic level of intelligence that man needs to achieve, to communicate, and that learning and consistent learning will enrich your life regardless of your race. (77.82)

"Cost" Reasons

Cost was ranked lowest in the frequency of factors regarding school choice. Our findings were that some families had resigned themselves to paying tuition as simply one more expense. One parent told us that she saw it as necessity of life, just like food. In the case of education, however, it was considered "food for character." (77.78)

DECIDING TO STAY: EXPECTATIONS FOR ACHIEVEMENT

Once children become students in an independent neighborhood school, families continually engage in a process of decision making regarding their continuation in the school. This process, unlike the initial decision to enroll a child, is based on the family's experiences within the independent neighborhood school environment. Now that they have an "insider's view" of the school, they focus on the achievements they can see have been made.

In this section, we will examine what families have found at independent neighborhood schools and why they keep their children in them. It, too, will be developed in light of the three classifications of family expectations in Table 29, since they pertain specifically to achievement. The headings that will be used to group the factors contributing to the family decisions are "academic", "culture affirmation", and "religious" expectations.

"Academic" Expectations

The quality of academic offerings is expected to be better at independent neighborhood schools. In the case of one

family in which the mother and father worked in different cities, keeping their daughter in an independent neighborhood school created some severe transportation problems. They considered withdrawing her, but friends helped to convince this family that there was more offered academically in the independent neighborhood school than their daughter would receive in the public schools. The decision was made to keep the child in the school. As we were told by the mother:

> One of my girlfriends...does a lot of substitute teaching, and she has "subbed" out in [neighboring area]. So, I would have to be sending [my daughter] out to school this way and she was saying, "You don't want to let her go to public school. Let her stay where she's at. She's getting this [reference to academic offerings]'
>
> And then another one of my friends said the same thing. "If you can't afford it, I'll help you. The public schools are this and that." (23.3)

Some families' academic expectations were very far reaching. In this example, a young father acknowledges the existence of a "white arena" and "black arena" and he wants his son to be "comfortable" in either:

> My idea of a Black school would be that my son could go through here, and then he could go Harvard Business School....It's not that he would necessarily become a civil rights activist. If he wanted to, he could. But he wouldn't be one or the other. That he would be very, very sophisticated, you know what I'm saying. That he would be able to go into any white arena and be very, very comfortable going into any Black arena. That's my ideal concept of what his education should be like. (23. 152)

"Culture Affirmation" Expectations

Throughout our field interviews with families, we sought to gain some understanding of the role that cultural concerns played. To learn more about the importance that attention to cultural needs played in the choices of schools families made, and subsequently in their satisfaction with the schools, we made deliberate efforts to probe our respondents with questions in this area.

We found that families had more to say when they talked about the importance of cultural affirmation as an expectation of what their children would learn than when these families were discussing their reasons for choosing a school. This behavior seems logical in one sense because the independent neighborhood schools may represent the only institution, outside their church and their family, which is oriented toward African-Americans. The respondents often seemed to misinterpret our inquiries regarding their interest in the "specific cultural needs of African American children." When asked initially whether their particular school's efforts in this area were important to them, many families hastily pointed out that they were not interested specifically in a Black school and had no objections to mixing with other races. They might go on to mention that it just so happened that this particular school was all Black. Sometimes, we would find that before the interview concluded, the same

parent would talk about how important it is for children to have a sense of cultural awareness as an African American and allude to the emphasis given the development of such an understanding in that school.

The following is an example obtained from a parent whose son attended a school that was totally African-American. She liked what her son was getting but wished he could get the same thing in an "integrated setting":

> I do wish there was an integrated setting here, because we are not just going to deal with us. We're going to be dealing with Hispanics. We're going to be dealing with Caucasian. So, I would love to see an integrated society. I would really love to see my child be at a school where there -- now -- now, don't misunderstand, 'cause I'm not contradicting what I've just said.... would like to see my child in school where there were all cultures, a melting pot, because that's the kind of society he's going to face when he walks out of these doors. (76.13)

It appears that interest in cultural affirmation is generally present for most families who enroll their children in independent neighborhood schools, though sometimes it is of implicit importance. The reluctance evident among many families to speak about this concern stems in part from a strong desire to avoid being cast as "separatists" for seeking a school that places a priority on the cultural affirmation of African-American children. The separatist label is to be avoided because it implies, for many, less-than-full participation in American society.

We offer the following excerpt from an interview with the mother and father of a kindergarten student as an illustration.

> RESEARCHER: Were you looking for something that was predominantly Black for your children as well as the strong academic program?
>
> MALE INFORMANT: I think that was secondary. We had experience with a Catholic school where the adminstrators were basically white and the student body was black...
>
> FEMALE INFORMANT: When we made the choice, we really were not looking for a Black program. We chose this because it had a good program, and it happened to be Black. But had we found a good program in a White setting we...I would not have a problem putting her there.
>
> (Later during the same interview)
>
> MALE INFORMANT: My preference would be a Black institution. We have never really had a totally integrated system. One of my pet peeves was busing. White kids were bused out of our community past me walking, and it was okay then. But they were busing White people from a predominantly Black living environment into White schools. Why couldn't those White kids go to the school that was closest to me?...Integration really hurt our school systems.
>
> (Still later)
>
> MALE INFORMANT: ...If kids go into a predominantly white environment those school systems will change them. You know you see a Black kid that's maybe not groomed properly. Whereas, here, in a Black environment, he's going to get that tender loving care that he needs. In a white school that kid could very well be labeled as a kid with a problem, with learning disabilities because nobody wants to take the time to get close to him. (19.139)

We also observed that in addition to being reluctant to state their preference for a racially homogeneous, independent school, a considerable number of families found it difficult to provide us with examples of the kinds of things they felt their children ought to know about their culture. More often than not, we were told that cultural awareness consisted of knowing the names of famous Black people. If a child came home and knew something about Black people that his/her families had not learned, the program was considered to be doing a good job.

Some African-American families have trouble articulating criteria for cultural affirmation in the schools because they did not have the opportunity to learn much about this area themselves. As one parent stated:

> I know when I went to school, I didn't know any...good Black or famous Black, or any Black that did anything. I didn't learn anything about Black history until I was in college. And at that time I only learned one course, one semester, and that was the furthest my studies went. Dr. Martin Luther King. I didn't know who he was until after he died. That's when I started doing my own research on Black people...[my son] needs that background. (58.42)

To complete our illustration of the diversity of viewpoint in this area, we also found families who are very clear and very emphatic about their expectations in the area of cultural affirmation. A young husband and wife who had recently relocated and enrolled their son in an independent neighborhood school said the following:

> One thing I wanted [our son] to have was an understanding and to know these different Black people because I feel that I should know them better....I figured this would be a school that he could go to and learn that because he probably knows quite a few Black people that I don't know, famous Black people because they emphasize a Black person every month. (23.161)

"Religious" Expectations

Religious expectations generally provide context for academic achievement. Families see themselves as sending their children to school to get a solid academic education, and they see religion as the best context for accomplishing that. One parent said it this way:

> I might have a stronger belief in religion, but I know if you have religion and don't know math and reading, you're not going to get that job. So I want him prepared. (58.39)

Some families have stronger expectations regarding religion. In the case of religious schools, the realiziation exists that a family actively chooses to attend and that good schools will attract some families that do not share the religious philosopy of the school. One parent let her feelings be known on this matter in the following statement:

> And if this is a Christian school, you know, then it ought to reflect Christian values and Christian standards. And if a person has a problem with that, then they shouldn't have their child here. You know, that's how I feel. (52.13)

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Institute for Independent Education recognized several years ago that independent neighborhood schools are a valuable part of the American educational system. The present research project, "Dare to Choose," is an attempt to discover more about these schools and why parents choose them for their children.

This study, therefore, began with five objectives, as follows:

1. To classify the schools by type of philosophy and by their staffing, enrollment, curriculum, and other policies;

2. To identify the outcomes families considered in selecting independent neighborhood schools for their children;

3. To determine what relationship, if any, exists between the expectations of families and the types of schools they choose;

4. To identify socially-determined perceptions, other than anticipated outcomes, that may have contributed to the choices families made; and

5. To disseminate information about the project to a wide audience.

We found that the schools can be classified as religious and secular institutions, devoted to providing options for the education of racially, ethnically, and culturally homogeneous enrollments of primarily urban youth. They were established by committed administrators, teachers, and parents who were

responding to social conditions in the communities they wanted to serve. These five-day academic schools maintain learning environments that are usually small and have the characteristics of neighborhood institutions, often developing an extended family atmosphere. Finally, these schools are autonomous from larger religious or secular organizations, not only in terms of financial support and institutional control but also in designing the content of their curricula.

The outcomes families consider important for their children include academic achievement; the affirmation of the racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds of their children; and providing religious or spiritual values as a context for the acquisition of knowledge. They are specifically looking for environments within which their children can be comfortable -- where they will find positive cultural reinforcement while they learn.

We also found congruence between the expectations of families and the understanding administrators have for the needs of the market they serve. The most-frequently-cited reasons for choosing a school involve the nature of the learning environment in an independent school compared to a public school. The second reason is usually the quality of the academic program. Less frequently mentioned, although still important, are reasons associated with affirming a child's cultural background and/or the religious teachings and affiliations of the school.

The socially-determined perceptions that contribute to family choices of educational options focus in large part on the process of withdrawing from the mainstream education system and developing a still-emerging set of criteria for what constitutes "a good school." The independent neighborhood schools in our sample appear to meet the criteria set by these families.

Having satisfied themselves that their children can and do achieve, these parents decide to keep their children in the new settings. At this point, parents become the network for spreading the word about the effectiveness of these institutions. The Institute for Independent Education is proud to be able to assist these parents by documenting and disseminating this descriptive account of their experiences.

We see the independent neighborhood school movement as one where families, teachers and administrators become equal partners in education. It is one where they have the flexibility to address their needs as <u>they</u> define them, where they are building institutions that are directly accountable to their markets.

The uniqueness of these schools, however, poses a marketing dilemma. Defending them as culturally-affirming institutions may appear to some potential supporters as contrary to behaviors sanctioned by the mainstream. On the other hand, these schools must be recognized as being distinctly American, growing out of our particular social fabric, with its unique

economic, political, and religious influences. They are contributing to building America not as a "melting pot" but as a mosaic of distinguishable parts. The focus is on developing young people to be more productive citizens, who can contribute to society with a clear vision of what they have to offer America and the world.

Many families are aware that having strong feelings of self-identity, especially if they are grounded in an African-American perspective, is not valued by society at large. Other families are ambivalent about how strongly to articulate the proper role of culture in the curriculum, for they do not wish to trade off the pursuit of academic quality for cultural affirmation -- as if they believed that both were not possible in a culturally homogeneous environment.

The study team believes that cultural affirmation and academic pursuits are the strengths of these schools, a unique combination that cannot be duplicated effectively by mainstream institutions. It is also an important source of strength and motivation to administrators, especially when their schools, which already have low tuition, are buffeted by external forces, such as downward shifts in the economy or rising operating costs.

Heavy reliance on tuition makes these schools vulnerable in this respect, because the size of any tution increases cannot outstrip the ability of families to pay. For this reason, greater support by society as a whole, and by African-American

communities in particular, is essential. Moreover, administrators must be prepared to explore more actively additional sources of income to support their institutions.

Families who survey the available options for educating their children clearly feel a lost sense of community with the public sector, resulting to a great degree from the increased professionalism and bureaucratization that prevents mainstream educators from being truly effective teachers. On the other hand, it would be most unfortunate to continue making the public sector the only or the primary barometer for measuring the success of these schools and their students.

The broad commitment of administrators and families to providing children with a "basic education" will be totally inadequate as society becomes more technologically advanced. Independent neighborhood schools must be concerned about planning for the future, building on their own perspectives and strengths, especially in the area of curriculum design. In those instances where institutions are outgrowing the management abilities of the original founding adminstrators, it will also be important to start paving the way for a transition to others who can lead their growing institutions and continue to develop them as a permanent part of the African-American community.

Families have a role in this future planning, too, but they must rise above the temptation to see these schools as merely short-term solutions to social conditions. Families

should be prepared to analyze carefully why they may feel the need to transfer their children to more traditional elite or public-sector schools, as long as the independent neighborhood school is in fact meeting the academic and social needs of their children. Families also should be prepared to increase their fundraising activities in order to strengthen the facilities and resources at these schools.

As more families assert their freedom to develop independent institutions, their competitive presence will reinvigorate the entire educational system in America. They will produce significant changes in education policymaking trends as well. Education then can be made more meaningful to a greater number of students, and freedom will have new meaning for us all.

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A P P E N D I C E S

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INSTITUTE FOR INDEPENDENT EDUCATION 4/86

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL FACT SHEET

"DARE TO CHOOSE" -- Appendix I

Institution:_____

Address:_____Zip:_____

Principal:_____ Phone: (_____)_____

* * * *

INSTITUTE FOR INDEPENDENT EDUCATION
"Parental Choice" Project 4/22/8

PHONE SCREENING OF SCHOOL LIST

1. Ask for the principal (by name, if known)

* if principal is busy, continue conversation with person who answers, until you can't go any further:

- I'm from the Institute, etc.

- You may remember Dr. Ratteray contacted you two years ago...(If necessary, say: "At that time she worked at the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise, and they held a conference in DC. She later left the Center and started her own Institute."

- Did you get the newsletter we sent out in February? It was called American Choices.

- Did you also get the brochure on the "MATH Alive!" course we're having this summer?

- We're updating the Institute's listing for your school. Could you please verify the information that we have?
(Verify old and get new information)

* In the next week or two, we're going to be sending you information on another project we have. We're going to be looking at why parents choose independent schools.

BENEFITS?

- will assist schools in marketing their services to other parents -- target their outreach, plan their curriculum, etc.;

- help parents clarify in their own minds what they are looking for in a school;

- enable the Institute to develop better programs to support independent schools;

WHY?

- When Dr. Ratteray visited some of the schools (over 65, across the country) many of them indicated to her that they really needed to know more about what their parents expected but didn't have the time to investigate it themselves, nor did they have the resources to find about parrents at other schools.

WHO IS PAYING FOR IT?

- the Institute was funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education;

WHAT WILL THIS REQUIRE OF SCHOOLS?

- initially, we need some information about your school. So, we'll send you a questionnaire to fill out. If you prefer, we can cover the questions on the phone.

- after this, some of the schools that participate will be asked to send a questionnaire to their parents.

(If the school presses for more detail, explain that only some of the schools will be selected, by random selection, to participate in the next phase that involves asking parents for their ideas about how they chose the school.)

(When we get to the stage of looking at the parents, if your school is selected, we will be able to pay a small stipend to your school for assisting us.)

INSTITUTE FOR
INDEPENDENT EDUCATION
INCORPORATED

June 4, 1986

Dear School Administrator:

I know this is not the best time of the year to send you a survey because you're busy getting ready for the summer holidays. We didn't get funded for this project until very late, but we would really appreciate your taking the time to fill out the enclosed form.

As a result of this study, we want to be able to describe what parents expect from schools. Why did they choose your school instead of another institution? What do they define as "a good education," and what do they expect their children will learn while at your school? It's questions like these that will help all independent schools improve their marketing strategies and better serve families in their communities.

Before we can ask those questions, however, we first need to see how you define your school, as well as how it is similar to or different from other independent schools across the country.

Please return the form to us in the enclosed postage-paid envelope in the next few days. We're looking forward to hearing from you.

Happy summer vacation!

Joan Davis Ratteray

Joan Davis Ratteray,
President

3330 Upland Terrace, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20015 (202) 362-3166

INSTITUTE FOR
INDEPENDENT EDUCATION
INCORPORATED

SURVEY OF INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

School: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Name of person providing information: _____

Position: _____ **Phone:(_____)_____ Date:_____**

1. **If visitors came to your school who knew nothing about it, how would you describe it to them? (Please use 25 words or less)**

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2. **What do you expect successful students to know by the time they graduate from your school? (Please use 25 words or less)**

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

3. **In what year did your school start?** _____

4. **Is your institution primarily:**

   ___ **a full-time day school?**
   ___ **a boarding school?**
   ___ **a supplemental school (e.g. weekend, after-school or other)?**

5a. Is your school affiliated with a church or other religious organization?

___ yes; ___ no

5b. If yes, which one?_____

5c. What is the relationship?_____

_____

6. Please estimate the percentage of your total income which comes from the following sources (Note: The total should equal 100%):

___ foundations
___ government sources (local, state, or federal)
___ church
___ community organizations
___ corporations
___ parent fundraising
___ tuition
___ other, specify:_____
100% TOTAL

7a. Does your curriculum emphasize a specific religious doctrine or belief?

___ yes
___ no

7b. If yes, please describe:_____

_____

_____

8a. Is your school designed specifically to address the needs of any particular racial, ethnic or cultural group?

___ yes (Please name the group:_____)
___ no
(If yes, go to #8b; if no, go to #9)

8b. How does your curriculum address the needs of the group in item 8a?

_____

_____

_____

8c. In addressing these needs, do you include curriculum components on the culture and history of the group named in item 8a, using any of the following approaches to curriculum design? (Indicate all that apply.)

___ required units of study within specific content areas;
___ specialized course offerings;
___ teacher initiated and designed activities;
___ required units of study across all content areas;
___ little or no incorporation of specialized approaches;
___ other, specify: _____

8d. What percentages of your instructional materials utilized to address the needs of the group named in 8a are:

___ % teacher made?
___ % teacher modified?
___ % commercially produced?
100 % TOTAL

8e. If your materials are made or modified by your teachers, is this because:

___ commercial materials are acceptable but too expensive?
___ you object to the content/approach of commercial material?
___ other, specify _____

9. Does your school calendar designate closings or other kinds of observances for any of the following:

a. any U.S. national holidays?
___ yes, please list: _____
_____
_____

___ no

b. religious holidays or events?
___ yes, please list: _____
_____
_____

___ no

c. historically significant personalities?
___ yes, please list: _____
_____
_____

___ no

d. culturally significant events or festivals?
___ yes, please list: _____
_____
_____

___ no

10. What is your school's total current enrollment?

___ less than 50
___ 50 to 99
___ 100 to 149
___ 150 to 199
___ 200 to 249
___ 250 to 299
___ 300 to 399
___ 400 to 499
___ 500 to 599
___ 600 to 699
___ 700 to 799
___ 800 to 899
___ 900 to 1,000
___ Over 1,000

11. From how many families or households do your students come?

___ households

12. How many students are in each of the following grades/age groups?

___ pre-primary (ages 2-5, pre-K)
___ primary (ages 5-8, grades K-3)
___ elementary (ages 8-10, grades 3-5)
___ middle school (ages 10-13, grades 5-8)
___ secondary (ages 13+, grades 9+)
___ TOTAL

13. Does your school award a high school diploma or its equivalent?

___ yes
___ no

14. What racial/ethnic groups are represented in your enrollment? Please state approximate percentages (Note: Total should equal 100%)

___ Black/African American
___ Hispanic Americans
___ Asian/Pacific Americans
___ White/Euroethnic Americans

15. What are your school's admissions practices (check any that apply)?

___ "open door" policy
___ testing for ENTRANCE
___ testing for PLACEMENT after admission
___ recommendations

16a. Do you have a waiting list for admission?

___ yes
___ no

16b. If yes, how many are presently on the waiting list? _____

17. What percentage of your students come from:

___ the immediate neighborhood
___ a wider metropolitan area
100 % TOTAL

18. What is your school's approximate student-teacher ratio?

___ students to every teacher

19. How many years has your school director held his/her position?

___ present director
___ immediately preceding director

20. How many people are on your teaching staff?

___ full-time
___ part-time
___ TOTAL

21. How many people are on your non-teaching staff?

___ full-time
___ part-time
___ TOTAL

22. Please give the number on your faculty in each category:

	Full-Time	Part-Time
State licensed or certified	___	___
Hold a bachelor's degree only	___	___
Hold advanced degrees	___	___
Hold no degree, license or certif.	___	___

23. What personal characteristics are most important in selecting your teachers?

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

24. In evaluating teachers:

a) What criteria do you use?

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

b) How often are they evaluated? _____

c) By whom are they evaluated? _____

25. What percentage of your staff live:

____ in the immediate neighborhood?
____ in the wider metropolitan area?
100 % TOTAL

26. What racial/ethnic groups are represented on your faculty? Please state in percentages. (Note: Total should equal 100%)

____ Black/African American
____ Hispanic American
____ Asian/Pacific American
____ Native American
____ White/Euroethnic American
100 % TOTAL

27. Please list the number of full-time faculty in each of the following age groups?

____ under 25 years of age
____ 25-34 years
____ 35-44 years
____ 45-54 years
____ 55 years or older
____ TOTAL NUMBER

28. What is your annual tuition?

a. For one child: $_____
b. For each additional child from the same family: $_____

29a. Are tuition payment options available?

___ yes ___ no

29b. If yes, which? (check any that apply)

___ semi-annually; ___ monthly; ___ weekly;
___ other, specify: _____

30. How many classrooms does your school have? ___ classrooms

31. Does your school have...

	Yes	No
audiovisual equipment	___	___
a gymnasium	___	___
a playground	___	___
a library	___	___
computers	___	___
science labs	___	___
free meals	___	___
student-purchased meals	___	___

32. Do you collect family income data? ___Yes; ___ No.

If yes, how many of your families are in the following income groups?

___ under $15,000
___ $15,000 - $29,000
___ $30,000 - $49,000
___ $50,000 or more
___ TOTAL

33. Mark THREE of the following activities in which your parents participate the most (Assign #1 for the greatest participation and #3 for the least):

___ formal evaluation of teachers
___ membership on the board of directors
___ your parent/teacher organization
___ teaching (full-time or part-time)
___ administration (full-time or part-time)
___ volunteer staff
___ fundraising
___ enrolled in workshops for developing parenting skills
___ inactive
___ other, specify _____

34a. How many people are on your governing board?

____ voting; ____ non-voting

34b. How many parents serve on your governing board?

____ voting; ____ non-voting

35. Mark THREE reasons why parents say they chose your school. (Assign #1 for the most important reason and #3 for the least):

____ discipline
____ religious content of curriculum
____ religious affiliation of school
____ academic reputation
____ proximity to family's home
____ teachers
____ available services like pre-school, after-school or tutorial
____ parental involvement in decisionmaking
____ extra-curricular activities
____ cultural content of curriculum
____ feelings of cultural kinship or solidarity
____ facilities
____ other, specify _____

36. To what extent is your school promoted in the community?

	Annually	Quarterly	Monthly	Weekly	Occasionally
a. Major event (public invited free)	___	___	___	___	___
b. Major event (paid admission)	___	___	___	___	___
c. Publication (your own books/pamphlets)	___	___	___	___	___
d. Your own newsletter	___	___	___	___	___
e. Purchased advertisement in the media	___	___	___	___	___
f. Sale of ads in your own souvenir journals	___	___	___	___	___
g. Personal visits to donors	___	___	___	___	___
h. Free media coverage	___	___	___	___	___
i. Other, specify: _____	___	___	___	___	___

37. Is the evaluation of your school:

a. Based on: ___ Formal, written criteria
___ Informal observation

b. Performed by (check all that apply):
___ Principal/Director; ___ Faculty;
___ Board; ___ Parent groups

c. and performed:
___ in group discussion; ___ separately

38. Do you regularly cooperate with other schools, such as:

___ Independent academic schools; ___ Private vocational schools
___ Public schools; ___ Colleges or universities

39. Please describe any distinctive teaching approaches used in your school:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

40. Are there any additional comments you would care to make about your school?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please note:

YOUR ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS WILL NOT BE PRESENTED SO THAT ANYONE WILL BE ABLE TO ASSOCIATE THEM DIRECTLY WITH YOUR SCHOOL.

YOU WILL ALSO RECEIVE A COMPLIMENTARY COPY OF THE REPORT ON THIS SURVEY AS SOON AS IT IS PUBLISHED!

In the next phase of this study, we will examine how parents reach their decision to choose a school. From among the schools responding to this phase, we will select a representative sample and invite them to participate in the next phase.

Would you like to participate in the next phase of this project?

____ yes
____ not sure, please provide more details
____ no

Thank you for your cooperation,

INSTITUTE FOR INDEPENDENT EDUCATION, INC.

Joan Davis Ratteray, President

Mwalimu Shujaa, Consultant

Mail to: 3330 Upland Terrace, NW, Washington, D.C. 20015; (202) 362-3166

October 15, 1986

^F1^
^F3^
^F4^
^F5^, ^F6^ ^F7^

Dear ^F8^:

Thank you for participating in our recent survey. Your school was one of 75 that responded, giving us an excellent 33% response rate. This is a history-making survey, because no one has taken such a thorough look at schools across the country.

When you returned our questionnaire, you said you wanted more information before you decided to continue with Phase Two of the survey. We are now able to give you some of our preliminary findings:

* There are as many high schools as there are elementary schools;

* Tuition ranges from $200 to $4,000 per year (averaging $1,500 for religiously-affiliated schools and $2,000 for secular schools);

* Enrollment goes from 25 to 1,300 students, although most schools have fewer than 150;

* Approximately half of the schools are affiliated with churches (church-owned or church-related)

* Eighty percent of the schools receive no assistance from government, foundations or business organizations;

* Most schools depend solely on tuition, with support from dedicated teachers and committed parents who make economic sacrifices;

* One-third of the church-affiliated schools and one-half of the secular schools have curricula designed specifically to address the history, culture, and contributions to society of the ethnic majority enrolled at those schools;

* A significant number of schools are structured to provide a supportive atmosphere, like that of an extended family;

In the second phase of our project, we need to hear from parents about why they chose your school. We would like to get 20 percent of your parents to participate, so we're planning to send them the enclosed letter and very brief questionnaire (only two pages).

This is where we need your help. Please designate someone from your school as our contact person, someone who can work with your parent list and help us choose the parents to be contacted. We'll send you the questionnaires with instructions for distribution and ask you to give them to each parent selected.

The parents will return the sealed envelopes directly to the Institute. All responses will be confidential, and parents will not be identified by name when we tabulate the data.

For each parent questionnaire that is returned, the Institute will pay the SCHOOL $5.00. (This can amount to as much as $100.00, depending on the number of parents who spond.) In addition, the CONTACT PERSON will be paid a stipend of $25.00 for the time devoted to this project.

Please return the enclosed form if you wish to continue with the project.

Sincerely,

Joan Davis Ratteray
President

TO: INSTITUTE FOR INDEPENDENT EDUCATION
P.O. Box 42571, Washington, DC 20015

October 1986

PARENTAL CHOICE STUDY

YES, we will participate in Phase Two of the Parental Choice study. Please send us the questionnaires as soon as possible!

NAME: _____

SCHOOL: _____

STATE: _____

INSTITUTE FOR
INDEPENDENT EDUCATION
INCORPORATED

October 14, 1986

Dear Parent:

Only a handful of children across America are able to attend schools like the one your child attends. Most people simply don't know about independent neighborhood schools, and that's a shame because they have a wonderful story to tell.

Your child's school is one of these. It, too, needs to tell how it has provided young people with hope and direction. It needs to reach other families right in your neighborhood and in your city. It needs to be able to attract money from funding sources locally and across the country. This is where the Institute comes in.

We want to give independent schools greater visibility, but first, we have to find out more about them. At this point, your school has already told us about how it operates.

Now we'd like to hear your point of view, because we're looking at how and why parents choose these institutions.

Please take a little time from your busy schedule to fill out the enclosed questionnaire. Your name will not be used when we tabulate our results, and we'll make sure you and your school learn what we find out as a result of this study.

Sincerely,

Joan Davis Ratteray

Joan Davis Ratteray
President

3330 Upland Terrace, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20015 (202) 362-3166

INSTITUTE FOR INDEPENDENT EDUCATION INCORPORATED
P.O. Box 42571, Washington, D.C. 20015

School

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

[Please do NOT put your name on this form. When you have answered all the questions, seal the form in the postage-paid envelope addressed to the Institute for Independent Education and mail it as soon as possible.]

1. What is the total size of your family/household? _____ **persons**

a. _____ are males over 18 years of age. Their ages are: _____
b. _____ are females over 18 years of age. Their ages: _____
c. _____ are children below school age. Their ages are: _____

2. What schools are your children attending, and at what grade did they start at that school?

	School Name	Private?	Grade	Age	Started
Child #1					
Child #2					
Child #3					
Child #4					
Child #5					
Child #6					

3. How much tuition do you expect to pay this school year?
_____ children in elementary school @ $_____ per year = $_____
_____ children in secondary school @ $_____ per year = $_____

4. Has either parent ever attended a non-public school?
Mother: ___No; Yes ___parochial, ___secular, ___other
Father: ___No; Yes ___parochial, ___secular, ___other

5. Please indicate the level of schooling each parent has completed:
Mother: ___Elem; ___J/High; ___S/High; ___Tech; ___4-yrUniv; ___P/Grad
Father: ___Elem; ___J/High; ___S/High; ___Tech; ___4-yrUniv; ___P/Grad

6. How many miles do you live from the independent school from which you obtained this questionnaire? _____ miles

7. What are your specific occupations?

a. Mother: _____ b. Father: _____

8. What was your total family income last year:
___ less than $15,000 ___ $30,000 to $49,000
___ $15,000 to $29,000 ___ Over $50,000

9. To which ethnic group(s) do the parents belong? (Check one or more):

___ Black/African-American; ___ Hispanic American; ___ American Indian
___ Asian/Pacific-American; ___ White/Euroethnic American;

10. When your children complete their studies at this independent school, what do you expect them to know? (Please use 25 words or less)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. What were your two major reasons for choosing an independent school?

a. _____

b. _____

12. Is this independent school affiliated with a church or religious organization? ___Yes ___No

13. If you answered yes, are you a member of that church or religious organization? ___Yes ___No

14. How and from whom did you learn about this independent school?

_____

_____

_____

_____

15. Do you participate actively in your children's school or classroom experience? ___Yes ___No

16. If so, what types of things did you do in the last 12 months?

a. _____ b. _____

c. _____ d. _____

e. _____ f. _____

17. Put a check mark beside the one(s) that you did in the last 30 days.

18. Do you have other relatives who have children in the same independent school your child attends?

___ Yes; ___ No

If yes, what is the relationship of the parent(s) to you? _____

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE!

INSTITUTE FOR INDEPENDENT EDUCATION, INC.
P.O. Box 42571, Washington, D.C. 20015

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS ON PARENT QUESTIONNAIRES

1. **You or someone you designate** to work with your parent list will be our contact person.

2. **The contact person** then will do the following:

   a. Take the parent list in whatever order it is now (whether alphabetical or in mixed order). The first parent on the list will be No. 1, the second No. 2, etc. It's not necessary to actually number each parent. Just treat them as if they are numbered.

   b. We will tell you which parent we have randomly selected as your starting point. At your school, you should start with:

   PARENT No. _____

   c. If your school has fewer than 200 students, write on a piece of scrap paper the name of every 5th parent, starting with the parent specified above. This will give us 20 percent of your parents.
   If you reach the end of the list before you get 20 percent of your parents, go back to the beginning of the list (Parent No. 1) and resume counting.

   d. If your school has more than 200 students, write down the name of every _____ parent, starting with the parent specified above. Do not exceed 40 names.
   If you reach the end of the list before you get 40 names, go back to the beginning of the list (Parent No. 1) and resume counting.

3. **When you have all the names** you need, turn this instruction sheet over and use the form on the back. Write the names of the parents you have selected. As you do this, they will automatically be assigned the code number shown in the left-hand column. This number matches the code number written on each of the forms we sent you.

   [No two parents will have the same code number, which will also protect their privacy. You keep the master list, matching names with code numbers, and the Institute will only be able to identify parents by code numbers.]

4. **Give each parent** their appropriately numbered questionnaire AND one of the Institute's self-addressed postage-paid envelopes. Ask the parents to mail the questionnaire directly to the Institute.

5. **YOUR SCHOOL WILL RECEIVE A DONATION OF $5.00 FOR EACH COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRE RECEIVED BY THE INSTITUTE.** 215

6. **THE CONTACT PERSON WILL RECEIVE A STIPEND OF $25 FOR THE TIME SPENT ON THIS PROJECT.** (This person must also sign a statement agreeing to the preceding steps for collecting the data.)

LIST OF PARENTS SELECTED

[Write the code number on each parent questionnaire.]

Parent Code	Parents' Names	Date Sent	Rec'd by Institute
01			
02			
03			
04			
05			
06			
07			
08			
09			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			

LIST OF PARENTS (Continued)
[Write the code number on each parent questionnaire.]

Parent Code	Parents' Names	Date Sent	Rec'd by Institute
21			
22			
23			
24			
25			
26			
27			
28			
29			
30			
31			
32			
33			
34			
35			
36			
37			
38			
39			
40			

INSTITUTE FOR INDEPENDENT EDUCATION, INC.
Parental Choice Project

SCHOOL CONTACT AGREEMENT

NAME OF CONTACT: _____

SCHOOL: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: Home (_____) _____

Work (_____) _____

I agree to develop the parent survey list according to the procedures stated on the "Instructions for School Administrators on Parent Questionnaires."

I agree that I will be paid $25.00 for my assistance on this project.

_____
Signature

_____
Social Security Number

_____
Date

School	Parent

INSTITUTE FOR INDEPENDENT EDUCATION
Parental Choice Project 10/86

PARENT INTERVIEW

PARENT: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

PHONE: (_____) _____ DATE: _____

* * * \

C. WHAT DID YOU EXPECT FROM THE SCHOOL?

1. WHAT HAVE YOU FOUND?
2. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE THE SCHOOL TO EMPHASIZE MORE?

D. HOW HAVE YOU BEEN INVOLVED?

E. HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE INVOLVED IN THE SCHOOL IN THE FUTURE?

III. Child

A. IN WHAT OTHER TYPES OF SCHOOLS HAS YOUR CHILD BEEN ENROLLED?

1. HOW HAS YOUR CHILD ADJUSTED?

2. IF OTHER CHILDREN HAVE GRADUATED, HOW HAVE THEY ADJUSTED TO OTHER SCHOOLING ENVIRONMENTS?

IV. Community

A. HOW DO YOU THINK OTHER PARENTS COULD BE RECRUITED TO ENROLL THEIR CHILDREN AT THE SCHOOL?

B. HOW IS THE SCHOOL PERCEIVED BY OTHERS WHO ARE NOT PART OF THE SCHOOL?

C. DO YOU SOCIALIZE WITH THE PARENTS AWAY FROM THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT?

V. Educational Issues

A. ARE THERE ANY DISADVANTAGES IN HAVING YOUR CHILD ATTEND A SCHOOL THAT HAS A PREDOMINANTLY BLACK ENROLLMENT?

B. WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES IN HAVING YOUR CHILD ATTEND A SCHOOL WITH PREDOMINANTLY BLACK ENROLLMENT?

INSTITUTE FOR INDEPENDENT EDUCATION
Parental Choice Project

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS INTERVIEW

ADMINISTRATOR: _____

SCHOOL: _____
PHONE: (_____)_____ DATE:_____

* * * \

Administrators' Interview, page 2

IV. PARENTS

A. HOW ARE PARENTS UTILIZED IN YOUR SCHOOL?

B. DO YOU HAVE A CORE GROUP OF PARENTS WHO ARE THE MOST ACTIVE IN SCHOOL AFFAIRS? WHO?

C. IS THERE ANY TURNOVER AMONG FAMILIES? WHY?

D. WHAT PERCENTAGE OF TURNOVER OCCURS:
- AFTER KINDERGARTEN? FIRST GRADE? SECOND GRADE?

V. ALSO ASK ADMINISTRATORS ABOUT:

A. NEWSLETTER? (How often?)

B. BROCHURE?

C. EVALUATIONS OF SCHOOL & TEACHERS?

D. TESTING:

1. Name of Test?

2. Administered by?

3. Frequency given?

4. Scoring?

E. SCRAPBOOK AVAILABLE?

F. NAMES OF TEXTBOOKS USED IN CURRICULUM?

INSTITUTE FOR INDEPENDENT EDUCATION
Parental Choice Project

TEACHER'S INTERVIEW

TEACHER: _____

SCHOOL: _____
PHONE: (_____)_____ DATE: _____

I. HOW LONG HAVE YOU TAUGHT AT THIS SCHOOL?

II. WERE YOU ALWAYS A TEACHER, OR DID YOU HAVE SOME OTHER CAPACITY HERE BEFORE YOU BECAME A TEACHER?

III. CAN YOU BRIEFLY DESCRIBE YOUR CAREER BEFORE YOU CAME TO THIS SCHOOL?
- Where have you taught before?

IV. HOW DO YOU SELECT THE CURRICULUM MATERIALS AND TEXTBOOKS FOR YOUR CLASSES?
- What would help make the job easier?

V. DO YOUR OWN CHILDREN ATTEND THIS SCHOOL?
- Or children of other members of your immediate family?

VI. WHAT ARE THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT NEEDS YOU HAVE AS A CLASSROOM TEACHER?
1.
2.
3.

VII. WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR SCHOOL TO BE ABLE TO OFFER YOU AS A PROFESSIONAL?

F	PSYCHOLOGIST
F	PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
F	PUBLIC WORKS
F	PURCHASING AGENT
F	QUALITY CONTROL INSPECTOR
F	RECREATION LEADER
F	RETIRED
F	RETIRED
F	RETIRED
F	RETIRED
F	RETIRED, BUSINESS AGENT
F	RETIRED, POST OFFICE
F	RETIRED, SEMI
F	RETIRED, US NAVY
F	ROBOT OPERATOR
F	SALES CONSULTANT
F	SALES REP
F	SALES REPRESENTATIVE
F	SALESMAN
F	SALESMAN
F	SALESMAN
F	SALESMAN
F	SALESMAN, AUTO
F	SANITATION DEPARTMENT
F	SCHOOL TEACHER
F	SCIENTIST, PAINT ANALYST
F	SECRETARY, ADMINISTRATIVE
F	SECURITY
F	SECURITY OFFICER
F	SELF-EMPLOYED
F	SELF-EMPLOYED
F	SELF-EMPLOYED
F	SELF-EMPLOYED
F	SELF-EMPLOYED
F	SELF-EMPLOYED, BUS. OWNR
F	SELF-EMPLOYED, CARPENTER
F	SELF-EMPLOYED, PRINTING
F	SELF-EMPLOYED, TRANSPORT
F	SEWER CONTRACTOR
F	SHIPYARD RIGGER
F	SOCIAL SERVICE AIDE
F	SOCIAL WORKER
F	SOCIAL WORKER
F	SOLDIER, CAREER
F	STORE MANAGER
F	STUDENT
F	STUDENT, SPECIAL ED ASST
F	SUPERVISOR
F	SUPERVISOR, COMM'CATIONS
F	SUPERVISOR, CONSTRUCTION
F	SUPERVISOR, PRODUCTION
F	SUPERVISOR, UTILITY
F	SURVEY INSPECTOR
F	TEACHER
F	TEACHER
F	TEACHER
F	TEACHER
F	TEACHER
F	TEACHER
F	TEACHER
F	TEACHER
F	TEACHER
F	TEACHER, ART
F	TEACHER, SCIENCE
F	TECHNICAL REPRESENTATIVE
F	TELEPHONE TECHNICIAN
F	TRAFFIC CONTROLLER
F	TRAIN OPERATOR
F	TRAINMARKER
F	TRANSIT, BUS DRIVER
F	TRANSIT MOTORMAN
F	TRANSIT WORKER
F	TRANSPORTATION WORKER
F	TRUCK DRIVER, CONSTRUC
F	TRUCK DRIVER
F	TRUCK DRIVER
F	TRUCK DRIVER (BEVERAGE)
F	TRUCK DRIVER
F	TRUCK DRIVER
F	TRUCK DRIVER
F	TV PRODUCTION DIRECTOR
F	UNEMPLOYED
F	UNEMPLOYED
F	UNEMPLOYED
F	UNEMPLOYED
F	UNEMPLOYED
F	UNEMPLOYED
F	UNEMPLOYED
F	UNKNOWN
F	UNKNOWN
F	UPHOLSTERER
F	UTILITY WORKER
F	VETERINARIAN
F	WAREHOUSE MANAGER
F	WAREHOUSE WORKER
F	WAREHOUSEMAN
F	WINDOW WASHER
F	WORKER
F	WORKER, NY CITY
F	XEROX OPERATOR

F	J.P. DEPUTY
F	JANITOR (CUSTODIAL AIDE)
F	JANITORIAL
F	JOURNALIST
F	JUVENILE ATTENDANT
F	LAB TECHNICIAN
F	LABOR COMPLIANCE OFFICER
F	LABORATORY TECHNICIAN
F	LABORER
F	LABORER
F	LABORER
F	LABORER
F	LABORER
F	LABORER
F	LABORER
F	LABORER
F	LABORER (HOME IMPROV)
F	LAW ENFORCEMENT
F	LAW ENFORCEMENT
F	LAWYER
F	LINEMAN
F	MACHINE OPERATOR
F	MACHINE OPERATOR
F	MACHINE OPERATOR
F	MACHINE OPERATOR
F	MACHINIST
F	MAIL CARRIER
F	MAINTENANCE
F	MAINTENANCE
F	MAINTENANCE, MECHANICAL
F	MANAGER
F	MANAGER
F	MANAGER
F	MANAGER
F	MANAGER
F	MANAGER
F	MANAGER (BUSINESS)
F	MANAGER (FED EXPRESS)
F	MANAGER (STORE)
F	MANAGER, AUTOMOTIVE
F	MANAGER, MARINE
F	MANAGER, OFFICE
F	MANAGER, PHARMACY
F	MANAGER, SEAFOOD
F	MANAGER, STORE
F	MANAGING EDITOR
F	MATHEMATICS
F	MEAT CUTTER, RETAIL)
F	MECHANIC
F	MECHANIC
F	MECHANIC, AIRLINE
F	MECHANIC SUPERVISOR
F	MECHANIST
F	MILITARY
F	MILITARY, ARMY
F	MILITARY, ARMY
F	MILITARY, MEDICAL
F	MILLWRIGHT
F	MORTICIAN
F	MUSICIAN
F	MUSICIAN
F	NAT AMER SCIENCE FOUND
F	NOT KNOWN
F	NOT STATED
F	NURSING
F	OIL FIELD WORKER
F	OPERATING ROOM TECH
F	PAINTER
F	PAINTER
F	PAINTER
F	PAINTER
F	PAINTER
F	PEDIATRICIAN
F	PGW
F	PHARMACIST
F	PHYSICIAN
F	PHYSICIAN
F	PILOT, CORPORATE
F	PLUMBER
F	PLUMBER
F	POLICE DETECTIVE
F	POLICE OFFICER
F	POLICE OFFICER
F	POLICE OFFICER
F	POLICE OFFICER
F	POLICE OFFICER
F	POLICE OFFICER
F	POLICE SERGEANT
F	POLICEMAN
F	POLICEMAN
F	PORTER
F	POSTAL (LETTER CARRIER)
F	POSTAL CLERK
F	POSTAL SERVICE (U.S.)
F	POSTAL SERVICE MANAGER
F	POSTAL WORKER
F	PROBATION OFFICER
F	PROFESSOR

F CATERING DRIVER
F CEMENT FINISHER
F CHARGER
F CHEF
F CLAIMS INVESTIGATOR
F CLAIMS SUPERVISOR
F CLERGY
F CLERGY
F CLERGY, INTERN
F CLERGYMAN
F CLERK
F CLERK
F CLERK
F CLERK, COURT
F CLERK, SECURITY
F COMPUTER AIDE
F COMPUTER ANALYST
F COMPUTER OPERATOR
F COMPUTER OPERATOR
F COMPUTER PROGRAM ANALYST
F COMPUTER PROGRAMMER
F COMPUTER SOFTWARE ENGIN
F CONSTRUCTION PAINTER
F CONSTRUCTION WORKER
F CONSTRUCTION WORKER
F CONSULTANT
F CONTRACT PROGRAMMER
F CONTRACT SPECIALIST
F CONTRACT SPECIALIST
F CONTRACTOR
F COOK
F COOK
F COOK
F CORRECTIONS OFFICER
F COUNCILMAN
F COUNSELOR, DRUG REHAB
F DECEASED
F DECEASED
F DECEASED
F DECEASED
F DECEASED
F DECEASED
F DECEASED
F DECEASED, COMPUTER TECH
F DELIVERY
F DISABLED
F DISABLED
F DIVORCED
F DIVORCED
F DOCTOR
F DON'T KNOW
F DRAFTING, SPACE PLANNING
F DRAFTSMAN
F DRIVER
F ECONOMIST
F EDUCATOR
F EDUCATOR (PRINCIPAL)
F EDUCATOR, H.S. DEPT HEAD
F ELECT. TECHNICIAN
F ELECTRICAL ENGINEER
F ELECTRICIAN
F ELECTRICIAN
F ELECTRICIAN
F ELECTRO-MECHANIC
F ELECTRONIC ENGINEER
F ELEMENTARY TEACHER
F ELEVATOR OPERATOR
F ENGINEER
F ENGINEER
F ENGINEER
F ENGINEER, CIVIL
F ENGINEER, ELECTRICAL
F ENGINEER, TECHNICAL
F FACTORY WORKER
F FACTORY WORKER
F FACTORY WORKER
F FARMER
F FIELD REPRESENTATIVE
F FINANCIAL OFFICER
F FIRE FIGHTER
F FLOOR LAYER
F FOOD SERVICE
F FOREMAN
F FOREMAN, WAREHOUSE
F FORK LIFT OPERATOR
F FOUNDRY CASTER
F GAS SPECIALIST
F GOVERNMENT
F GRAPHIC DESIGNER
F GROUP LEADER
F GUIDANCE COUNSELLOR
F HEALTH DIRECTOR
F HOUSEKEEPER
F INFORMATION SPECIALIST
F INSTRUCTOR
F INSURANCE AGENT
F INSURANCE AGENT
F INSURANCE AGENT
F INTERIOR DESIGN
F IRON WORKER

OCCUPATIONS OF FATHERS:

		F	0
		F	0
F	0	F	0
F	0	F	0
F	0	F	0
F	0	F	0
F	0	F	0
F	0	F	0
F	0	F	0
F	0	F	0
F	0	F	0
F	0	F	0
F	0	F	0
F	0	F	0
F	0	F	0
F	0	F	0
F	0	F	0
F	0	F	0 (NOT SURE)
F	0	F	0, N/A
F	0	F	0, N/A
F	0	F	0, NOT IN HOME
F	0	F	ACCOUNTANT
F	0	F	ACCOUNTANT
F	0	F	ACCOUNTANT
F	0	F	ACCOUNTANT
F	0	F	ACCOUNTANT (CPA)
F	0	F	ADMIN
F	0	F	ADMINISTRATOR
F	0	F	ADMINISTRATOR, COLLEGE
F	0	F	ADMINISTRATOR, MED SCHOOL
F	0	F	ADMINISTRATOR, PERSONNEL
F	0 - DECEASED	F	ATHLETIC DIRECTOR
F	0	F	ATT REPRESENTATIVE
F	0	F	ATTORNEY
F	0	F	ATTORNEY
F	0	F	AUDITOR, ACCOUNTANT
F	0	F	BANK CLERK
F	0	F	BANK CLERK
F	0	F	BANK MESSENGER
F	0	F	BANKING
F	0	F	BOILER ENGINEER
F	0	F	BOOKBINDER
F	0	F	BUILDING MAINTENANCE
F	0	F	BUS OPERATOR
F	0	F	BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
F	0	F	CARPENTER
F	0	F	CARPENTER
F	0	F	CARPENTER
F	0	F	CASE MANAGER

M	TEACHER, SHOP OWNER
M	TEACHER, SPEC ED
M	TEACHER, SPECIAL EDUCATION
M	TEACHER, SPECIAL EDUCATION
M	TEACHER'S AIDE
M	TEACHER'S AIDE
M	TEACHER'S AIDE
M	TEACHER/WRITER
M	TEACHING
M	TELEPHONE OPERATOR
M	TELEPHONE OPERATOR
M	TELEX OPERATOR
M	TELLER
M	TRANSIT OPERATOR
M	UNEMPLOYED
M	UNEMPLOYED
M	WORD PROCESSING OPERATOR
M	WORD PROCESSOR
M	WORD PROCESSOR
M	WORKER, NY CITY

M	SECRETARY
M	SECRETARY
M	SECRETARY
M	SECRETARY
M	SECRETARY
M	SECRETARY
M	SECRETARY
M	SECRETARY
M	SECRETARY
M	SECRETARY
M	SECRETARY
M	SECRETARY
M	SECRETARY
M	SECRETARY, LEGAL
M	SECRETARY, SCHOOL
M	SELF-EMPLOYED
M	SELF-EMPLOYED
M	SELF-EMPLOYED
M	SELF-EMPLOYED
M	SELF-EMPLOYED (SMALL BUS)
M	SELF-EMPLOYED, DRAFTSMAN
M	SENIOR (WP)
M	SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE
M	SEWING
M	SITTER
M	SOCIAL SERVICES (DEPT. OF)
M	SOCIAL WORKER
M	SOCIAL WORKER
M	SOCIAL WORKER
M	SOCIAL WORKER
M	SOCIAL WORKER
M	SOCIAL WORKER
M	SOCIAL WORKER
M	SOCIAL WORKER
M	SOCIAL WORKER
M	STATISTICS
M	STUDENT
M	STUDENT
M	STUDENT
M	STUDENT
M	STUDENT (COLLEGE)
M	STUDENT ADVISOR, COLLEGE
M	STUDENT, ARTIST
M	STUDENT, MEDICAL
M	STUDENT, MEDICAL RECORDS
M	STUDENT, TRAFFIC AGENT
M	STUDENT/HOUSEWIFE
M	SUPERVISOR
M	SUPERVISOR
M	SUPERVISOR
M	SUPERVISOR, WORD PROCESS
M	SWITCHBOARD OPERATOR
M	TAPE LIBRARIAN
M	TAX TECHNICIAN
M	TEACHER
M	TEACHER
M	TEACHER

M	MAID
M	MAINTENANCE
M	MANAGER
M	MANAGER
M	MANAGER, ASSISTANT
M	MANAGER, BUSINESS
M	MANAGER, OFFICE
M	MANAGER, RESTAURANT
M	MANAGER, SALES
M	MANAGER, STATION
M	MANAGER, STORE
M	MANAGER, STORE
M	MEDICAL ASST, ORTHODON
M	MEDICAL, EPIDEMIOL
M	MEDICAL TECHNICIAN
M	MEDICAL TECHNOLOGIST
M	MICROBIOLOGIST, SENIOR
M	MILITARY, PERSONNEL TECH
M	MONEY MANAGEMENT
M	MONITOR
M	MUSIC, CHORAL DIRECTOR
M	MUSICIAN/COMPOSER
M	NONE
M	NURSE
M	NURSE
M	NURSE
M	NURSE
M	NURSE
M	NURSE
M	NURSE
M	NURSE
M	NURSE
M	NURSE
M	NURSE ASSISTANT
M	NURSE, HOUSEWIFE
M	NURSE, LIC PRACT
M	NURSE, PRACTICAL
M	NURSE, PRACTICAL
M	NURSE, REGISTERED
M	NURSE, REGISTERED
M	NURSE, REGISTERED

M	COMPUTER OPERATOR
M	COMPUTER PROGRAMMER
M	COMPUTER SYST ENG
M	CONGRESSIONAL AIDE
M	COSMETOLOGIST
M	COST CLERK
M	COUNSELOR
M	COURT REPORTER
M	COURT REPORTER
M	CRIMINAL JUSTICE
M	CUSTODIAN
M	CYTOTECHNOLOGIST
M	DATA ENTRY
M	DATA ENTRY CLER
M	DATA PROCESSOR
M	DECEASED
M	DENTAL ASSISTANT
M	DIE MAKER
M	DIETARY AIDE
M	DIETICIAN
M	DIRECT CARE AIDE
M	DIRECTOR, PERSONNEL
M	DISABLED WIDOW
M	DOCTOR
M	DOMESTIC
M	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
M	EDUCATOR
M	EDUCATOR
M	EDUCATOR
M	EDUCATOR
M	EDUCATOR, ACADEM DEAN
M	EDUCATOR, P-K DIRECTRESS
M	EMPLOYMT TRAING COUNSELOR
M	ENGINEER
M	EQUITY TRADING ASSISTANT
M	EXECUTIVE, VICE PRES
M	FACTORY INSPECTOR
M	FACTORY WORKER
M	FACTORY WORKER
M	FINANCIAL LOAN OFFICER
M	FUNERAL DIRECTOR
M	GOVT RELATIONS SPECIALIST
M	GUIDANCE COUNSELOR
M	HAIR STYLIST
M	HAIRSTYLIST
M	HEAD
M	HEAD CASHIER
M	HEALTH CARE WORKER
M	HEALTH EDUCATOR
M	HOMEMAKER
M	HOMEMAKER
M	HOMEMAKER
M	HOUSEKEEPER
M	HOUSEMOTHER
M	HOUSEWIFE
M	HOUSEWIFE
M	HOUSEWIFE

Appendix VI

OCCUPATIONS OF MOTHERS AND FATHERS AS ACTUALLY LISTED BY RESPONDENTS

(NOTE: n=399 families.)
(LEGEND: "0" represents no response for this parent on this form; Each form had a space for one mother's and one father's description.)

OCCUPATIONS OF MOTHERS:

M	0
M	0
M	0
M	0
M	0
M	0
M	0
M	0
M	0
M	0
M	ACCOUNT REPRESENTATIVE
M	ACCOUNTANT
M	ACCOUNTANT
M	ACCOUNTANT
M	ACCOUNTING
M	ACCOUNTING CLERK
M	ACCOUNTS CLERK
M	ADMIN
M	ADMINISTRATIVE AIDE
M	ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
M	ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
M	ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
M	ADMINISTRATOR
M	ADMINISTRATOR
M	ADMINISTRATOR, GOV'T
M	ADMINISTRATOR, RESEARCH
M	ADMINISTRATOR, YOUTH
M	ASSEMBLER
M	ASSEMBLY
M	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
M	ASSISTANT, PERSONNEL
M	ASSISTANT, STAFF
M	BANK CLERK
M	BANK CLERK
M	BANK EMPLOYEE
M	BANKER
M	BANKING
M	BANKING (TELLER)
M	BANKING, CLERICAL
M	BANKING, SALES REP
M	BEAUTICIAN
M	BILLING SPECIALIST
M	BOOKKEEPER
M	BOOKKEEPER
M	BOOKKEEPER, F/C
M	BUS DRIVER
M	BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE.
M	BUYER - MAIL ORDER STORE
M	CASE WORKER
M	CASHIER
M	CASHIER
M	CASHIER/COOK
M	CATERER
M	CATERING DRIVER
M	CHILD CARE / HOMEMAKER
M	CHILDCARE
M	CLAIMS APPROVER
M	CLAIMS APPROVER
M	CLERGY
M	CLERICAL
M	CLERICAL
M	CLERICAL WORK
M	CLERICAL WORKER
M	CLERK
M	CLERK
M	CLERK
M	CLERK (ADMINISTRATIVE)
M	CLERK, ACCOUNTING
M	CLERK, HUMAN RESOURCES
M	CLERK, MEDICAL RECORDS
M	CLERK, PURCHASING
M	CLERK, SALES
M	CLERK, SR. AUDIT
M	COLLECTOR
M	COMMUNITY WORKER
M	COMPUTER ENGINEER
M	COMPUTER OPERATOR
M	COMPUTER OPERATOR

INSTITUTE FOR INDEPENDENT EDUCATION, INC.
Parental Choice Project

STUDENT'S INTERVIEW

STUDENT: _____

SCHOOL: _____

Date _____

* *

I. WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT THIS SCHOOL?

II. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SUBJECT?

III. HOW MUCH HOMEWORK DO YOU HAVE?

IV. WHAT FUN ACTIVITIES DO YOU ENJOY THE MOST AT YOUR SCHOOL?

V. DO YOU HAVE SPECIAL AWARDS FROM YOUR SCHOOL?